00063788

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from
Observer Research Foundation
on 17 May, 2019

A HISTORY OF PAINTING

XVIII

LA TOUR

1704 – 1789

"THE DAUPHIN"

(Louvre)

(From Haldane Macfall's "French Pastellists" by kind permission of Messrs Macmillan)

A HISTORY OF PAINTING

BY HALDANE MACFALL

WITH A PREFACE BY

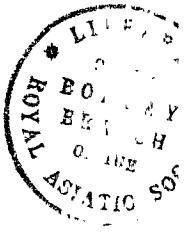
FRANK BRANGWYN

IN EIGHT VOLUMES. ILLUSTRATED WITH TWO HUNDRED PLATES IN COLOUR

63788

VOL. VI

THE FRENCH GENIUS



LONDON: T. C. AND E. C. JACK
67 LONG ACRE, W.C.
AND EDINBURGH
1911

759.
Mac/His.
63788

TO

MADAME

YVETTE GUILBERT

ONE OF THE SUPREME ARTISTS

OF THE AGE

THIS BOOK

IN TOKEN OF COMRADESHIP

H. M.

FOREWORD

Our self-appointed dictators of taste have of late set up a fantastic code of laws wherewith to judge works of art, compact of a seething rubbish called the science of picture-making—save the mark!—whereby painting would seem to be some schoolmaster's business composed of Vitality wedded to Repose and built about Unity with a dash of Infinity! This law-mongering seems to arise at every step in art; and, judging by the solemn way the writers quote each other, it probably helps them to try and believe in each other. But the pretty business has a sorry time of it when applied to such subtle art as that created by the genius of France. We at once see these gentry tangled in the whirl of confusion, contradicting themselves, and reshuffling their precious "science" at the corner of every blind alley into which it leads them, until we arrive at such self-complacent egregiousness as this: "Everything ugly is not beautiful, at least unless it contain the definite conditions of Beauty, external, relative, and interior!" It is of a piece with the same writer's penetrating insight into courage, when he speaks of Gros, "effeminately nervous," fleeing from a Paris studio to the battlefields of Napoleon!

Thus and otherwise it is usual to apologise for the art of France. That art needs no apology. The French are amongst the most artistic people in the world. In no land has art been more intimate —in none come nearer to the soul of the race. That is why French art is so universal when practised by her greater masters. It concerns itself with the emotions uttered by colour rather than in intellectual vagaries. It had to rid itself of a heavy burden of Italian tradition; but it shed it through Watteau and Chardin. Her portraiture concerns itself with life, seeking to catch the mood of the sitter. Her genius, though bewildered by the Italian vision, did

not waste itself on things outside art—religious idealism or symbolism, or the like.

The earlier art of the Renaissance in France concerned itself with the splendour of princes, whether of the land or the church. It was followed by the art of the "Grand Siècle" of Louis XIV, in which all the arts were bent to the purpose of stating the grandeur and splendour of that mock-heroic and bombastic Court. It was magnificent as it was uncomfortable; as palatial as it was wholly without hint of the home-loving life. It was with the seventeen-hundreds that at last there came into France that democratic fulfilment of the idea of the home, in spite of the splendour of the decaying Court. The prig and the pedant despise it, and the prude shudders at it, allowing excuses for a Watteau here and a Chardin there, but turning shocked eyes upon it, because, in some fantastic way they have come to see in it all only an elaborate naughtiness! But the real significance of eighteenth-century art in France is as utterly hidden from English criticism as though it did not exist except in a number of suggestive canvases.

From the death of Louis XIV, and of all that his pompous age meant, the French people rapidly moved towards the democracy of the Revolution; and though this may seem paradoxical in face of the gallantry and splendour of the decaying aristocracy, it is clear-cut and precise for those who have vision in the art that came into France with Watteau. Behind all, and at the base of all, was the glory of the home as against the pomp of palaces. The whole art of France of the seventeen-hundreds is deep-seated in the home, whether of the great ones or the peasant.

Men and women asked that gaiety and blitheness should come into their lives; and if some danced too frantically, and an immodest beauty showed on occasion an immodest ankle, the censorious have always inclined to note an indiscretion, forgetful of the surrounding quietude.

Art is concerned with tragedy as with comedy; its province is as much in the realm of passion, as in such works as had to do with sex, as in any other realm of the emotions. But when art revels in the little indecencies the sole value of which lies in mediocre artistry

applied to naughtiness, art is debased. Yet there is a fashion to-day to applaud the technique of little men whose art was steeped in mean indecencies, whilst great artists like Boucher are scorned by the self-appointed dictators of taste.

The influence of France in the seventeen-hundreds upon Europe was prodigious. She made the home exquisite and refined—a place worthy to dwell in. The superficial writers upon art for ever harp upon the selfish gaiety of the rich, forgetful that Chardin, one of the supreme painters of all time, and others were creating art for the humbler classes—that the engravers were sending forth masterpieces to the most modest homes. They abuse the selfishness and shallowness in high places, forgetting that France was creating the while, through stern-willed and witty men of iron, the mightiest revolution of the ages—that the scorned eighteenth century bred Washington and Lafayette, Mirabeau and Napoleon, Chatham and Burke. They sneer at the "immodesty" of Boucher, forgetting the viler insinuations of many of the vaunted Italians, forgetting that the worst sins of France were gentle compared with the vile abominations that were the everyday life of Renaissance Italy and reached to the chair of St. Peter.

To the French genius was granted an exquisite and subtle sense of colour, a fine sense of line, with wit and grace. It is intensely intimate, well-bred, gracious, humane. She triumphed in the Gothic age in creating superb cathedrals. She grew to be one of the supreme creators of furniture. And it was but fit and right that at last the splendour of the art of painting should be granted to her.

For the French Renaissance a fine authority is Bouchot; in English one of the soundest authorities is Dimier in his French Painting of the Sixteenth Century. *To Lady Dilke the debt for research into French art is prodigious, whether in her* Claude Lorrain *or her well-known volumes upon* French Painting *and kindred arts. In spite of the exasperating fact that near a half of Lady Dilke's volume on the* French Painters of the Eighteenth Century *is in untranslated French, and that the book is put together in loose fashion, it is the best work that we have upon the period, and its research is careful. With its opinions we have little concern, though they put*

many a pompous "authority" to shame, for her judgments are uncommonly sound. There is an excellent little monograph upon Claude *by G. Grahame; and one of the best is the small volume by Dillon. On* Watteau *and his school the volumes by Edgcumbe Staley and Claude Phillips are good works. Concerning* Boucher, *I have endeavoured to give a fairly full account of his life and works in a monograph written for a Connoisseur Extra Number, there being no other work upon him in our tongue of any serious intent—indeed the whole field covered by* Boucher, Fragonard, Lemoyne, *and this group, is pathetically and incompletely handled in English. One of the supreme artists of all these years,* Chardin, *has not yet received his bays in English literature. Indeed, the whole age and race are misunderstood and underrated by pedants, superficial writers, or aggressive prigs. Upon* David, Girodet, Ingres, Delacroix, Géricault, *I know no competent work in English, the writers being concerned with repeating the fatuous estimates of the past, and without deep sense of the real significance of art.*

To understand the history of art in France, once official notice was taken of the exercise of it, 'tis well to grasp the play of the Academy amid the endeavour of France. To the Academy of Literature founded by Richelieu, Mazarin added later the Academy of the Fine Arts. The Immortals, who were first "agrée" (or accepted) and became Associates, were "reçu" or received as full Academicians on painting their "picture of reception." The picture of reception had to be painted in a certain time. From the moment of being "agrée," the artist had the right to show works at the Salons. The rank carried high social advantages; and the Salons became a stately social event. The Royal Academy was bitterly hostile to the painters' Academy of St. Luke, and eventually attacked and destroyed it. There were elaborate grades and ranks in the Academy; and portrait-painters were considered of lower status than historical painters; whilst painters of the Home-Life and of manners were relegated to humble position. The freer life of the years that followed upon the death of Louis XIV made the artists fret against the tyranny of the Academy; and the success of the Academy against the Academy of St. Luke in 1777, *and its very*

triumph in bringing about the suppression of all rival exhibitions led to its own downfall—the Academicians rebelled under David against the officials, and with the Revolution in 1793 *came the "Fall of the Bastille of Painting."*

The Royal Board of Works had a dominant position over the Academy, and it became of vast importance to the artists by consequence as to who directed the Board. The Academy was always in money difficulties from the Royal troubles over the purse. Orry cared little to pour money into the venture, but on the Pompadour's coming to power he was soon sent packing, and her "uncle" De Tournehem became her liberal administrator of the King's Buildings. He was followed by her brother, the amiable and artistic Marquis de Marigny. On Marigny depended the protection of art throughout the important years of her power; and he exercised his position with consummate ability, and a large-hearted and generous spirit in marked contrast with the official consequence of his successor D'Angiviller.

HALDANE MACFALL.

CONTENTS

PAGE

FOREWORD vii

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

CHAPTER

I. Wherein French Painting is seen to be Born in Flanders 3

1500

II. Of the Cradle of Painting in France under the Valois . 13

III. Wherein a second Cradle is brought into France by the King to the Nursing of Art 18

IV. Wherein the Genius of the French Portrait Dies of Terror of the Bells of St. Bartholomew . . 25

V. Wherein we see the Cradle of Fontainebleau bring forth a Feeble Folk under the last of the Valois . . 34

VI. Wherein Henri of Navarre fails to bring Genius to Fontainebleau, even from Flanders, but the Portrait flourishes 39

1600

VII. Wherein France, taught by Italian Masters, proceeds to make Italian Music 46

THE GRAND MANNER

VIII. Wherein the Art of France bursts into Song . . 61

CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

IX. Wherein the Mock-Heroic Age of King Sun brings forth its Autocrat of all the Arts 76

X. Concerning the rise of the Great Portrait-Painters under King Sun 89

XI. Which has to do with the Painters of the Chase in the splendid years of King Sun 100

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

XII. Wherein Prince Charming steps into France through the Gates of the North 109

XIII. Wherein a Weaver of Sweet-sad Dreams discovers France to France 114

XIV. Wherein we see the Gaiety of the Troubled Soul of Watteau descend upon the Painters of France . 134

XV. Wherein we see the Portrait of the Years of Watteau change the Great Ones into elegant Gods and Goddesses 148

XVI. Wherein, out of the Kitchen, enters into France one of the Supreme Painters of all Time 152

XVII. Which has to do with a Mighty Rivalry that divides the Town, and the Winning leads to Death . . 165

XVIII. Wherein we behold, out of the Studio of the self-slain Lemoyne, arising the *Glory of Paris* 171

XIX. Wherein we see the Landscape of Claude being turned into the New Style of the Seventeen-Hundreds . 198

XX. Wherein, out of a Police-Court Scandal, enters the Great Maker of the Portrait of Louis the Fifteenth's Age 201

XXI. Wherein the Portrait of Louis the Fifteenth's Years comes to further Triumphs 213

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXII.	Wherein a Handsome Dandy is seen to essay the Homely, not always with success, but catches the Allure of Girlhood	218
XXIII.	Wherein we see Genius equally at Home in the Land of Watteau and the Realm of the Homely, but baffled by the Antique	225
XXIV.	Wherein we see the Classic Ruin enter into the Watteau Landscape in the later Seventeen-Hundreds .	246
	THE WINTER OF FRENCH ART	
XXV.	Wherein we see the French Portrait on the eve of the French Revolution essaying to play with the Antique Frigidity	251
XXVI.	Wherein the Icy Breath of Antiquity blows across the French Genius and wellnigh Freezes it to Death .	258
XXVII.	Wherein the Pupils of Frigidity break from the Antique and make for the Land of Romance . .	277

ILLUSTRATIONS

XVIII. La Tour—*The Dauphin* . . . *Frontispiece*

PLATE		AT PAGE
I.	François Clouet—*Elizabeth of Austria* . .	28
II.	Nicolas Poussin—*The Shepherds in Arcadia* . .	54
III.	Claude Lorrain—*A Seaport*	66
IV.	Mignard—*Françoise de Bourbon* . . .	84
V.	Rigaud—*Louis XV*	94
VI.	Largillière—*Prince James Stuart and his Sister Louisa as Children*	98
VII.	Watteau—*The Fountain*	126
VIII.	Watteau—*L'indifférent*	128
IX.	Watteau—*Fête Champêtre*	130
X.	Lancret—*Conversation*	136
XI.	Nattier—*Madame Louise*	150
XII.	Chardin—*La Gouvernante*	158
XIII.	Chardin—*Le Bénédicité*	160
XIV.	Chardin—*Still-Life*	162
XV.	Boucher—*Pastoral*	184
XVI.	Boucher—*Diana leaving the Bath with one of her Companions*	186
XVII.	Boucher—*Madame de Pompadour* . . .	192
XIX.	Drouais—*La Dame en Rose*	218

ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE		AT PAGE
XX.	GREUZE—*The Broken Pitcher*	220
XXI.	FRAGONARD—*The Fair-Haired Child*	226
XXII.	FRAGONARD—*Chiffre D'Amour*	232
XXIII.	FRAGONARD—*The Schoolmistress*	236
XXIV.	VIGÉE LE BRUN—*Madame Vigée Le Brun and Child*	254
XXV.	DAVID—*Portrait of Madame Récamier*	270
XXVI.	INGRES—*The Source*	276
XXVII.	DELACROIX—*The Entry of the Crusaders into Constantinople*	282

MAP OF FRANCE xxiii

CHART OF THE FRENCH PAINTERS 1

LIST OF PAINTERS

Angelis, Pierre, 139.
Antoine de Recouvrance, 43.
Aubry, Etienne, 147.
Audran, Claude, 117.

Badouin, 20, 22.
Bandol, Jacques, 4.
Barthélemy, 56.
Batavus, Godofredus, 16.
Baudouin, 197.
Beaubrun, Louis, 47.
Belle, 85.
Bellejambe of Douai, 14.
Belon, Nicolas, 38.
Berain, 116.
Bertin, 32.
Blanchard, Jacques, 37, 46.
Boilly, 147.
Bollery, Jérôme, 37.
Bollery, Nicolas, 37, 41.
Bombare, Georges, 32.
Bonington, 279.
Borgognone, 87.
Boucher, François, 174-196.
Boule, 116.
Boulogne, Bon, 87.
Boulogne, Louis, 87.
Boulougne, Jean de, 52.
Bourdon, 46, 56.
Bouteloup, 26.
Broederlam, Melchior, 5.
Bunbury, 32.
Bunel, François, 38.
Bunel, Jacques, 40, 43.

Carmoy, 22, 23.
Caron, Antoine, 24, 36.
Cassanova, B., 147.
Champaigne, Philippe de, 47.
Champion, Petit-Jean, 15.
Chardin, 153-164.
Charonton, Enguerrand, 11.
Chiffelin, 9.
Claude, 46.
Clouet de Navarre, 17.
Clouet, François, 17, 25.
Clouet, Jean, 14, 15, 16, 17.
Corneille de Lyon, 30, 31, 32.
Courmont, Jean de, 9.
Courtois, Jacques, 87.
Courtois, Marie, 149.
Cousin, Jean, 24.
Coypel, Antoine, 86, 111.
Coypel, Charles Antoine, 87.
Coypel, Noel, 86, 87, 111.

Danloux, 217.
Darlay, 43.
David, Jacques Louis, 263-268.
De Bar, Bonaventura, 141.
Debrie, Jean, 40.
De Champaigne, Philippe, 47.
De Courmont, Jean, 9.
Decourt, Charles, 38, 43.
Decourt, Jean, 37.
Decourt, Susanne, 38.
De Heere, Lucas, 33.
Delacroix, 279-282.
De la Fosse, 81, 87, 111, 121.
De Lahyre, Laurent, 46.
De la Joue, Jacques, 139.
Delanne, Etienne, 24.
Delaroche, Paul, 279.
De Leu, Thomas, 36, 42.
De Limbourg, Pol, 7.
Delorme, Philibert, 22.
Demarne, 200.
Denisot, Nicolas, 26.
Deruet, Claude, 63.
Des Barres, 141.
Deshayes, 196.
Desportes, Alexandre François, 100.
De Troy, Jean François, 103, 111, 165-168.
Dhoey, Jan, 40.
De Voltigeant, Josse, 40.
Dorigny, 20, 22.
Doumoustier, Etienne, 23.
Doumoustier, Geoffrey, 23.
Doyen, 229.

PAINTERS

Drolling, Martin, 279.
Drouais, François Hubert, 217.
Drouais, Hubert, 217.
Drouais, Jean Germain, 217.
Dubois, 40.
Dubreuil, Toussaint, 39.
Ducerceau, 24.
Dughet, Gaspard, 74.
D'Ulin, Pierre, 134.
Dumée, Guillaume, 40, 41.
Dumoustier, Côme, 42.
Dumoustier, Daniel, 42.
Dumoustier, Etienne, 26, 41.
Dumoustier, Geoffrey, 41.
Dumoustier, Pierre, 42.
Dupérac, Etienne, 40.
Duplessis, Joseph S., 216.
Du Pouche, 203.
Duval, Marc, 32, 38.

Eisen, Charles D. J., 146.
Eisen, François, 146.
Errard, Charles, 63.

Fosse, Charles de la, 87.
Foulon, Benjamin, 30, 43.
Fouquet, Jean, 7.
Fragonard, Jean Honoré, 225-244.
Franck, Ambrose, 33.
Franck, Hieronymus, 33.
Fréminet, Martin, 41.
Froment of Avignon, 11.

Galloche, 168.
Gautier, Leonard, 36.
Gellée, Claude, 61.
Geoffrey, Guillaume, 16.
Gérard, 268.
Gérard, Marguerite, 244.
Géricault, 278.
Gillot, 111, 116.
Girodet, 268.
Gourdelle, Pierre, 36.
Greuze, Jean Baptiste, 218-224.
Grimou, Jean Alexis, 103.
Grison, 118.
Gros, 277.
Guérin, 268.
Guiard, Madame, 257.
Guiot, Laurent, 41.
Guyard, Madame, 257.

Hall, 257.
Hallé, Claude, 141.
Hay, Jean, 9.
Heere, Lucas de, 33.
Honnet, Gabriel, 40.
Huet, 147.
Hutin, 118.

Ingres, 269-276.

Janet, 14-17.
Jean of Bruges, 4.
Jeaurat, Etienne, 140.
Jouvenet, Jean, 88, 111.

Ketel, Cornelis, 33.

Lafrensen, Nicolas, 146.
Laguerre, 111.
Lahyre, Laurent de, 46.
Lallemand, Georges, 47.
Lallement, 9.
Lancret, 117, 134-137.
Lantara, 199.
Largillière, 47, 95-99, 11
Lavreince, Nicolas, 146.
Le Bas, 146.
Leblond, Nicolas, 38.
Le Bourguignon, 87.
Le Brun, Charles, 79-81
Le Brun, Vigée, 251-25
Le Chalier, 257.
Ledigne, Nicolas, 43.
Lefebvre, Claude, 90.
Lemannier, Germain, 26.
Lemoyne, François, 168-170.
Le Nain, Antoine, 51.
Le Nain, Louis, 51.
Le Nain, Mathew, 51.
Lépicié, Nicolas Bernard, 245.
Leprince, 200.
Lerambert, Henri, 36, 41.
Le Sourd, 32.
Le Sueur, Eustace, 57.
Le Valentin, 52.
Limbourg, Pol de, 7.
Liotard de Genève, 257.
Liotard, Jean Etienne, 142.
Liotard, J. M., 144.
Loir, Alexis, 214.
Lorrain, Claude, 61-74.

PAINTERS

Lundberg, 257.

Maitre de Moulins, 7, 9.
Malouel, Jan, 6.
Marmion of Valenciennes, 14.
Martellange, 32.
Massé, 142, 257.
Master I.D.C., 43.
Menageot, 264.
Mercier, Philippe, 140.
Meusnier, Philippe, 139.
Mignard, Pierre, 82-85.
Monnoyer, Jean Baptiste, 87.
Moreau, Louis Gabriel, 248.
Musnier, 22, 23.

Nanteuil, 47.
Natoire, 171.
Nattier, Jean Baptiste, 149.
Nattier, Jean Marc, 149.
Nattier, Marc, 149.
Nollekens, Joseph François, 142.

Ollivier, Michael Barthélemy, 145.
Oudry, Jean Baptiste, 101.

Parmentier, 111.
Parrocel, Joseph, 87, 118.
Patel, Pierre, the Elder, 74.
Patel, Pierre Antoine, the Younger, 74.
Pater, Jean Baptiste Joseph, 119, 137-8.
Patin, Jacques, 37.
Perreal, Jean, 9.
Perrier, 46.
Perronneau, Jean Baptiste, 213-216.
Pesne, Antoine, 140, 147.
Pilon, Germain, 36.
Poisson, Louis, 43.
Poncet, 86.
Pourbus, 43.
Poussin, Gaspard, 74.
Poussin, Nicolas, 53-56.
Poyet, Jean, 9.
Primaticcio, 20.
Prud'hon, Pierre, 259.

Quesnel, François, 42.
Quesnel, Nicholas, 42.
Quesnel, Pierre, 24.
Quillard, Pierre Antoine, 144.
Quillerier, 86.
Quillert, Pierre Antoine, 144.

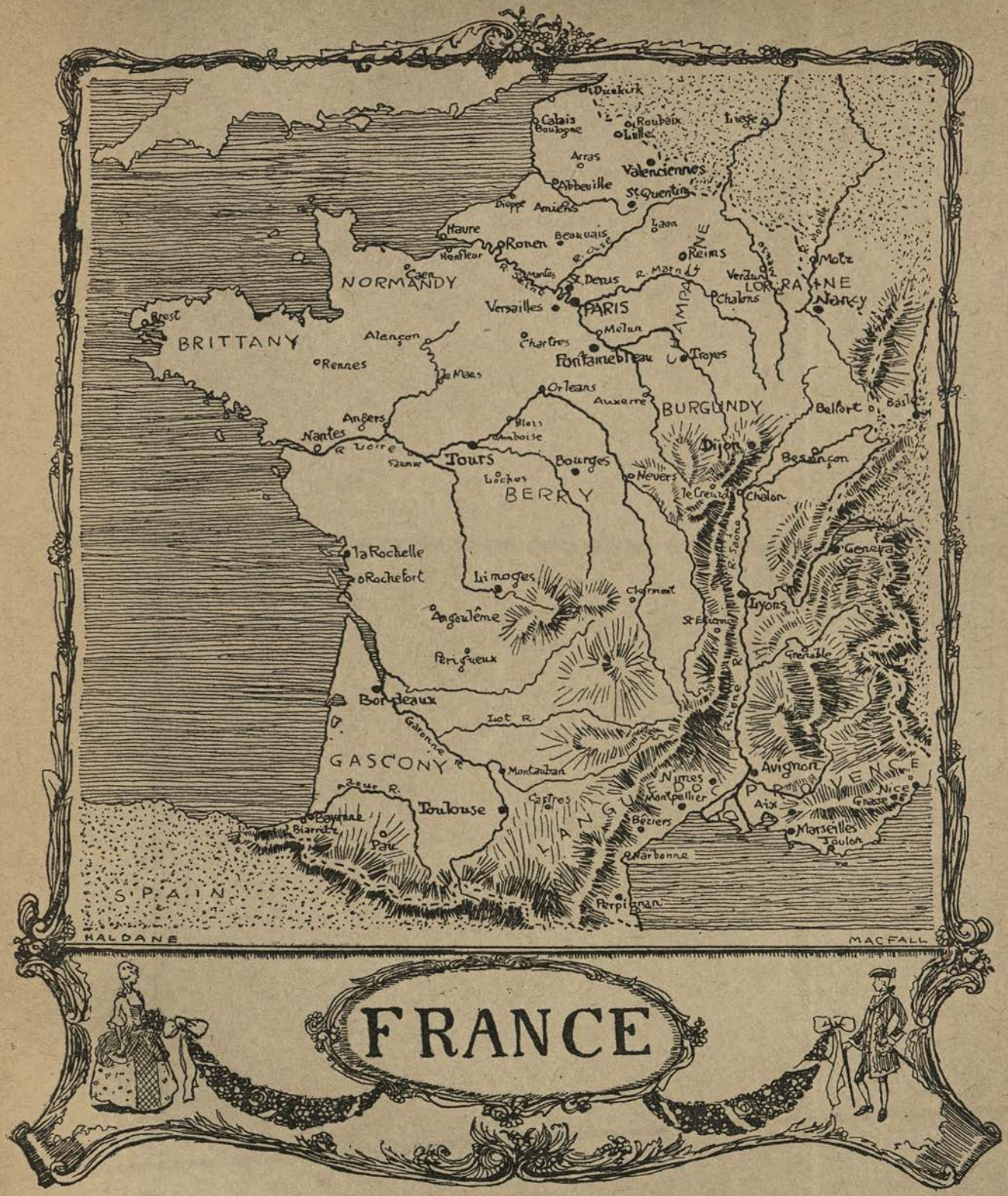
Rabel, Jean, 43.
Raoux, Jean, 103.
Regnault, 264.
Restout, Jean, 170.
Rigaud, 90-94.
Robert, Hubert, 246-248.
Rochetel, 22.
Roslin, Alexandre, 216.
Rosso, 20.
Rougemont, 22, 23.

St. Martin, 21.
Santerre, Jean Baptiste, 88.
Scheffer, Ary, 279.
Scipion, Jean, 26.
Spoede, 202.
Subleyras, Pierre, 103.
Suvée, 264.

Taraval, Hugues, 196.
Tardieu, 202.
Taunay, Nicolas Antoine, 147, 200.
Testelin, Pasquier, 40.
Tocqué, Louis, 151.
Tournières, 168.
Trinquesse, 147.
Troost, Cornelis, 141.

Valentin, 53.
Van der Meulen, Adam François, 85.
Van Loo, Carle, 172-174.
Van Loo, Jean Baptiste, 172.
Varin, Quintin, 53.
Venitien, Georges, 32.
Vernansal, 118.
Vernet, Carle, 199.
Vernet, Horace, 199.
Vernet, Joseph, 198.
Vestier, Antoine, 217.
Vien, Joseph Marie, 258.
Vigan, 270.
Vincent, 264.
Voltigeant, Josse de, 40.
Vouet, 46, 52.

Watteau, François, 147.
Watteau, Jean Antoine, 114-133.
Watteau, Louis Joseph, 147.
Wille, 147.


Dunkirk
Calais
Boulogne
Roubaix
Lille
Liege
Arras
Valenciennes
Abbeville
St Quentin
Dieppe
Amiens
Laon
Le Havre
Rouen
Beauvais
R. Oise
Reims
R. Moselle
Metz
Honfleur
NORMANDY
Caen
R. Seine
St Denis
R. Marne
Verdun
LORRAINE
Nancy
Versailles
PARIS
Chalons
Brest
BRITTANY
Alençon
Chartres
Melun
CHAMPAGNE
Fontainebleau
Troyes
Rennes
Le Mans
Orleans
Auxerre
BURGUNDY
Belfort
Basle
Angers
Nantes
R. Loire
Blois
Amboise
Tours
Bourges
Dijon
Besançon
Nevers
Le Creusot
Chalon
BERRY
La Rochelle
Rochefort
Limoges
Clermont
R. Saone
Geneva
Lyons
Angoulême
St Etienne
Perigueux
Grenoble
R. Rhone
Bordeaux
Lot R.
Garonne R.
GASCONY
Montauban
Avignon
PROVENCE
Nice
Grasse
Nimes
Montpellier
Aix
Toulouse
Carcassonne
Beziers
Marseilles
Toulon
Bayonne
Biarritz
Pau
Narbonne
SPAIN
Perpignan
HALDANE
MACFALL

FRANCE

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

FRENCH PAINTERS

BANDOL "Jean of Bruges" — Jean d'Orléans

Broederlam — Malouel — Limbourg

FOUQUET 1415? – 1485? (Perréal, Poyet, Bourdichon, Maître de Moulins) — Froment — CHARENTON 1410–after 1461

JANET or Clouet 1475–1541 — CHAMPION — Bellejambe of Douai 1470?–1535 — Marmion of Valenciennes

CORNEILLE DE LYON 1500?–1572 — CLOUET — Limoussin

Rosso and Primaticcio found the SCHOOL OF FONTAINEBLEAU — Jean Cousin

Geoffrey Dumoustier — Boutelou — FOULON –1613

Bunel — DECOURT — Duval — Patin — CARON — Pilon — Larembert — Bollery

Pierre Quesnel

François Quesnel — Etienne Dumoustier 1530–1603 — Côme Dumoustier — Jacques Bunel — Charles DECOURT –1612 — Dubreuil 15..–1602 — Dubois –1614 — Nicolas Bollery — FERMINET –1619

PIERRE Dumoustier –1646? — Daniel Dumoustier 1570– — THE LE NAINS 1588–

NANTEUIL — VOUET 1590–1649 — Jean de Boulogne 1591–1634 — POUSSIN 1594 – 1665

CHAMPAIGNE 1602– — LE SUEUR 1617–1655 — BOURDON 1616 – 1671 — CLAUDE 1600 – 1682

MIGNARD 1610–1695 — LE BRUN 1619–1690 — COYPEL 1628–1707 — VAN DER MEULEN 1643 – 1690 — Dughet 1615–1675

LEFEBVRE 1632–1675

LARGILLIÈRE 1656–1746 — RIGAUD 1659–1743

DESPORTES 1661–1743

OUDRY 1689–1755 — Berain — GILLOT 1673–1722 — AUDRAN

NATTIER 1685–1766

WATTEAU 1684 – 1721

TOCQUÉ 1696–1772 — DE TROY 1679–1752 — LEMOYNE 1688–1737 — LANCRET 1690–1743 — PATER 1695–1736

CHARDIN 1699–1776

LA TOUR 1704–1789 — PERRONNEAU 17..–1796 — DROUAIS 1727–1775

BOUCHER 1703–1770 — Carle van Loo 1705–1765

GREUZE 1725 – 1805 — FRAGONARD 1732–1806 — LAGRENÉE 1735–1784

JOSEPH VERNET 1714–1789

DUPLESSIS 1725–1802

VIEN 1716–1809 — ROBERT 1733–1808 — LANTARA 1729–1778

DAVID 1748–1825

CARLE VERNET 1758–1836

Labille Guiard 1749–1803 — Vigée Le Brun 1755–1842 — PRUD'HON 1758–1823

HORACE VERNET 1789–1863

Girodet 1767–1824 — Gérard 1770–1837 — INGRES 1778–1867 — GUÉRIN 1774–1833 — GROS 1771–1835

GÉRICAULT 1791–1824 — DELACROIX 1798–1863 — DELABOCHE 1797–1856

The Master I.D.C.

A HISTORY OF PAINTING

CHAPTER I

WHEREIN FRENCH PAINTING IS SEEN TO BE BORN IN FLANDERS

WHEREIN FRENCH PAINTING IS SEEN TO BE BORN IN FLANDERS

The eleven-hundreds and twelve-hundreds saw French architecture creating masterpieces in the form of cathedrals and churches that are amongst the supreme works of man's hands. This Gothic architecture is absolutely national, without debt to any other people or genius. Sculpture evolved in majestic fashion to the decoration of this superb art. But painting lagged. The thirteen-hundreds have left us that drawing on white silk of scenes from the Passion that is called the *Parement of Narbonne*; and it can have been no isolated artistic act. The Flemings were soon to arouse the innate French taste for colour.

An important point to remember is that tapestries took the place amongst the northern peoples of fresco in the south. The tapestry-weavers were busy in Paris as early as 1300, and were prosperous there through the thirteen-hundreds. Glass-painting in France was also famous. The designing of tapestries, and the glow of colour in glass-painting, created from the first that sense of colour and of decoration that were to be the exquisite inheritance of the French people. The painting of illuminations for manuscripts completed the basic foundation of French art.

At the death of Charles IV of France, in 1328, the house of Valois came to the throne. Philip VI reigned from 1328 to 1350; his son John (le Bon) from 1350 to 1364; whose son Charles V (le Sage) followed him from 1364 to 1380, to

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

be followed by his son Charles VI (le Bien-aimé) from 1380 to 1422, whose third son succeeded him as Charles VII (le Victorieux) from 1422 to 1461, at whose death his eldest son Louis XI reigned from 1461 to 1483, being followed by his son Charles VIII from 1483 to 1498.

With the death of Charles VIII the throne passed from the Valois to the house of Valois-Orleans, and the Gothic period ends, to give way to the so-called Renaissance. "The Primitives" is the name generally given to the artists of this period.

Deeply rooted in the Flemish art was the living art of France.

THE PURSUIT OF NATURE BY THE PAINTERS UNDER THE DUKES OF BURGUNDY

In 1361 the King of France, Jean le Bon (1350-1364), came by inheritance to the Duchy of Burgundy, on the death of Burgundy's last duke, Philippe de Rouvre. The king gave this rich inheritance to his fourth son, Philippe le Hardi; and Philippe le Hardi marrying Marguerite, heiress of the Counts of Flanders, Burgundy and Flanders became one realm in 1384.

These united lands remained one under the Burgundian princes of the French royal house of Valois—Jean Sans Peur (1404-1419), Philippe le Bon (1419-1467), and Charles le Téméraire (1467-1477). And this close on a hundred years from 1384 to 1477 was a period of keen support of artists, whom the Burgundian rulers drew to their splendid Court. Flemish artists were called to Dijon, founding the so-called School of Burgundy, which, we must be careful to remember, was in reality a Flemish school of painting.

Now the eldest son of Jean le Bon became King of France as Charles V of France (1337-1380), and he, like his Burgundian brothers, was a lover of art and of books. His famous Court-painter was the Flemish JACQUES BANDOL, called JEAN OF BRUGES, he who designed the tapestries in Angers Cathedral. A diptych of the *Crucifixion* at Florence, of the Flemish-French school of Jean of Bruges, shows an astounding advance in

artistry, with a grip of depth as well as height and width that is very remarkable. A third son of Jean le Bon, Jean Duc de Berry, who died in 1416, the centre of a brilliant Court at Bourges, made a splendid library of manuscripts illuminated by Flemish artists who largely worked in Paris. The *Parement de Narbonne* is supposed to have been made by Jean d'Orleans, painter to Charles v, in 1374.

WHEREIN FRENCH PAINTING IS SEEN TO BE BORN IN FLANDERS

Paris, be it remembered, during the late thirteen-hundreds, was a great intellectual centre in Europe; and here the Flemish art gradually developed a graceful, tender, and exquisite quality which is markedly French in genius. Unfortunately, just as Paris was developing a fine art of marked French individuality, the Civil War of 1410, followed by the disaster at Agincourt in 1415 and the Treaty of Troyes in 1420, cast a gloom over France, and sent the artists flying to Burgundy, where what may be called the Franco-Flemish Renaissance came to blossom. This early Franco-Flemish art is somewhat baffling to separate from pure Flemish endeavour. And it must be remembered that France as we now understand the word was not the same thing as the France of those days.

We must therefore keep an eye on Flemish alongside of the beginnings of French art. Gothic art in Flanders had evolved with the wealth of that country, which from about 1300 had excited the wonder of the world. Then in 1390 we get MELCHIOR BROEDERLAM of Ypres, painter to Philippe le Hardi, painting the shutters of the carved altarpiece at Dijon in 1392; whilst the Flemish sculptor Claux Sluter went to Burgundy and carved the *Well of Moses* and the like. Now, as Reinach pointed out in his famous lectures to the École du Louvre, all this was finished by 1405; whilst Ghiberti's beautiful gates for the Baptistry at Florence were wrought full thirty years later, and Masaccio was not born until 1401. It is clear, then, that Flemish art in 1400 was very greatly in advance of the art of Italy. We are prone to overlook this significant fact. Nor must we forget that, in painting, Paul de Limbourg and his brothers made their illuminations of their

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

fine Chantilly *Book of Hours* before 1416, for the Duc de Berry died in that year. The uncle of the Limbourgs, JAN MALOUEL, was working in Paris about 1400. A panel of a *Pietà* at Troyes and a *Pietà* in the Louvre give the type of this style.

The Louvre holds Malouel's *Crucifixion and the Martyrdom of Saint Denis*. Malouel came from Guelderland, but is said to have formed his style in Paris. With him comes increase of Flemish realism into France. A fine *Annunciation* at Aix reveals this realistic increase, is Burgundian in type, and is of about this time. Pol de Limbourg shows in his *Book of Hours* a wide vision of Nature, from the winter's snow, the ploughing and sowing in spring, the reapers in the fields, to the hunting in the autumn, that is as remarkable as his portrayal of the peasant in the early fourteen-hundreds.

Paris, then, was creating exquisite work early in the fourteen-hundreds. Nor was this French art, founded on the Flemish, confined to Paris. It was spread along the Rhine, and was penetrating into Italy. In 1400 Philippe le Hardi was buying Italian ivories and medals—the Italian Pietro of Verona was his librarian ; whilst the Flemish art was being taken into Italy, and so continued to be taken during the fourteen-hundreds. And it is exceedingly likely that Masaccio's reaction against Giottism was largely due to Flemish art. We have seen that, in the middle fourteen-hundreds, the Flemish painters had no rivals as colourists; and the Italians were collecting their works, being particularly drawn to Flemish realism.

Naturally, the Franco-Flemish painters during the fourteen-hundreds were largely influenced by the great Flemish genius of this time, though they were already tempering Flemish realism with the innate French sense of grace and elegance. Then, as we have seen, the disasters to France about 1410 scattered the artists from Paris over Burgundy, Touraine, and Provence.

The artists scattering over the central provinces, we find during the fourteen-hundreds the three centres of Berri, Touraine, and the Bourbonnais bursting into song; each province giving

forth its master. In Berri, at Bourges, was POL DE LIMBOURG; in Touraine, at Tours, arose FOUQUET to work for Charles VII; in the Bourbonnais, at Moulins, the MAÎTRE DE MOULINS wrought for Pierre II de Bourbon.

WHEREIN FRENCH PAINTING IS SEEN TO BE BORN IN FLANDERS

There arose at TOURS a great successor to Pol de Limbourg:

FOUQUET
1415 – 1485?

During the reigns of Charles VII and Louis XI of France, there was working at Tours the famous painter JEAN FOUQUET, who wrought in this the city of his birth. Paris and Berlin possess fine portraits by him. He painted *Charles VII* in 1444. He went to Rome to paint the Pope in 1445, but soon returned to France. Chantilly has his series of forty miniatures of 1455 for the *Etienne Chevalier* "*Book of Hours.*" Fouquet's most famous work is his *Melun diptych*: one shutter, the *Virgin and Child*, is now at Antwerp; the other, of *Etienne Chevalier and his Patron Saint*, is at Berlin.

The exquisite miniatures from the Etienne Chevalier *Book of Hours* reveal an astounding advance, as in the delicious pastoral infused with the spirit of May, and the poetic realism is absolutely lyrical.

The Melun diptych was long hung over the tomb of Stephen (Etienne) Chevalier and his wife, Catherine Budé, at Melun. The Virgin is said to have been painted from Charles VII's mistress, Agnes Sorel, who had greatly favoured the Chevalier who was Treasurer of France. At the death of Agnes Sorel the painting was placed over her tomb; but on Louis XI coming to the throne he had the painting removed. Etienne Chevalier's own wife died on the 24th of August 1454, and seven years thereafter he placed the picture over her tomb. The Louvre possesses the fine portrait of the artist himself at thirty-five, which was wrought in enamel on silver and was one of the decorations upon the frame of the picture. Fouquet repeats this picture in his *Book of Hours*. Fouquet was clearly a

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

greater portrait-painter than could be found in all Italy, or the Pope had not sent for him. He developed art prodigiously. Instead of using a light ground and painting dark upon it, he builds up the lights from the dark. He rejects line and employs mass. This is a stupendous advance in technique. If the Liechtenstein *Portrait of a Man* be by him, his advance is astounding.

One of the most interesting illuminated manuscripts of these years of the fourteen-hundreds is the *Gaston Phœbus* manuscript of the chase. When the burly Landsknechte from the Tyrol, under their giant leader Georg von Frundsberg, charged and won the hotly contested battle of Pavia, part of their booty taken from François I's tent was the vellum *Gaston Phœbus* manuscript which the French king carried with him on his wars. The designs are reputed to be the work of Fouquet or one of his assistants. The author of the book was Count Gaston de Foix, the well-known patron of Froissart, who began the book in 1387 and died in 1391. It was copied freely. Gaston de Foix was a war-dog and mighty hunter, called from his handsome person and golden hair *Gaston Phœbus*. Fouquet, born about 1415, was painter and valet-de-chambre to Charles VII, so that the miniatures are at earliest of about 1435. The scrip holds the coat-of-arms of the house of Saint-Vallier. Now, in 1477, roughly a generation before the battle of Pavia, Jacques de Brézé, returning unexpectedly to his home, found his wife in guilty converse with a young noble, and slew the pair. But his wife was Charlotte of France, natural daughter to the king, Charles VII, and De Brézé only saved his own life by payment of a colossal fine and two years' imprisonment. Of his six motherless children, his eldest son married Diane of Poitiers, who soon thereafter became the mistress of François I and all-powerful in France, as she later became the mistress of his son, Henri II. Diane de Poitiers, of course, was daughter to Jean de Poitiers, lord of Saint-Vallier, and her mother was Diane, natural daughter of Louis IX; and this manuscript was probably a part of the dower of this mother to Diane. Now it

so chanced that two years before the battle of Pavia wrecked the French king in Italy, Jean de Poitiers was discovered to be in the conspiracy of the Constable de Bourbon, and he was sent to the scaffold; he was kneeling to receive the blow from the axe when the pardon arrived to pluck him from the jaws of death—that pardon wrung from the king by Jean's daughter, Diane de Poitiers, on the condition of the forfeiture to the king of all his possessions, of which this *Gaston Phœbus* was one of the treasures, which thereby fell to the king, who had it in his tent when Georg von Frundsberg and his mighty Tyrolese overwhelmed him at Pavia.

WHEREIN FRENCH PAINTING IS SEEN TO BE BORN IN FLANDERS

Fouquet, a fine illuminator, was not so happy when he essayed painting on the panel.

THE SCHOOL OF TOURS

If the portraits of *Charles VIII* and *Anne of Brittany* in oils on wood at Paris, which form the cover of a book, be considered French, they show Fouquet's tradition being corrupted. Tradition remains of a CHIFFELIN and a LALLEMENT at the Court of Charles VIII, and of JEAN DE COURMONT painting a *Virgin* for Queen Anne, for whom JEAN POYET wrought his *Book of Hours*, though Poyet is unknown except as an illuminator. POYET, of the *Book of Hours* of 1492 for Anne of Brittany; BOURDICHON, who flourished from 1484, Court-painter to Charles VIII and François I, and illuminated the great *Book of Hours* for Ann of Brittany (1503) as well as two other famous manuscripts; to him is now given the *Altarpiece of St. Anthony* at Loches—this triple picture of the Crucifixion, signed F. I. B., belongs to the year 1485; and JEAN PERRÉAL called PERRÉAL DE PARIS, who flourished from 1490, and by whom is no known work, were the three chief artists of the years of Charles VIII and Louis XII. Perréal worked at Lyons. A JEAN HAY is also mentioned in 1503.

In the BOURBONNAIS arose a painter known as the MAÎTRE DE MOULINS, who succeeds in the French achievement to

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

Fouquet. He shows French vision founded on the Flemish. He was to be the last fine painter of this age, before the Italian invasion came to usurp the French tradition. The earliest known work by him is the *Nativity* from Autun, in which kneels the donor, Cardinal Jean Rolin, the son of that Chancellor Rolin who kneels before Van Eyck's *Virgin*. Rolin died in 1483, so that this painting dates about 1480. The work shows the influence of Van der Goes. The Louvre has a *Donatress and Saint* by this French master; and Madame de Eyturbe a fine *Portrait of a Girl*. Glasgow has his *Donor protected by St. Victor*, long given to Van der Goes. Last of all is the large triptych in the Cathedral at Moulins, which gives this nameless artist his title.

Of his school are the little picture of the *Virgin and St Anne enthroned* in the Church of St. John at Joigny, which is very Flemish.

Of the works of the artists at MOULINS are the famous portrait of *Charles Orland*, the little son of Charles VIII, at two years and two months, dated 1494; and the altarpiece in two parts of *St. Jerome* and *St. Sebastian* at Brou. The National Gallery has a superb work, the *Legend of St. Giles*, of this period, which it is difficult to separate from the Flemish school, though it displays an exquisite and subtle colour-sense that is very French in feeling. This *St. Giles with the wounded Hind* reveals the exquisite French subtlety of vision for tender hues. Colonel Stuart Mackenzie possesses the companion panel of *The Mass of St. Giles*, once in Lord Dudley's collection. The Louvre has two portraits of the *Duke of Bourbon* and his *Wife*, the daughter of Louis XI, dated 1488, which are sometimes given to a "Master of the fleur-de-lis," or "Master of 1488," but this is frank guesswork. And it should be said that the so-called Glasgow *Prince of the House of Cleves*, long given to Hugo van der Goes, is now sometimes given to this shadowy "Master of the fleur-de-lis." This "Master of 1488" is also said to have painted the famous *Triptych of Moulins*, or "Virgin in Glory." The small *Virgin with the Angels* at Brussels is also given to

him. At Moulins itself also are a *Legend of St. Lawrence* and a *Legend of St. Etienne* that prove artistic activity, at any rate, under the Duke of Bourbon in the late fourteen-hundreds.

WHEREIN FRENCH PAINTING IS SEEN TO BE BORN IN FLANDERS

AVIGNON
in the South

The emigration of the Popes to Avignon in 1309 drew Italian artists thither, and the Provence School was early Italianised.

FROMENT

FROMENT of Avignon, who painted the *Burning Bush*, 1476, now in the Cathedral at Aix, worked at the Court of René of Anjou (1417-1480), who had established his Court in Provence after the loss of Naples and Sicily. Little is known of his life. Oddly enough he used the same models as Charonton, which suggests comradeship. This altarpiece at Aix, like Charonton's, was early given to Flemish artists. The Louvre has a double-picture by Froment of *The King* and his wife, *Joan of Laval.*

CHARONTON
1410–after 1461

Of the masters of Avignon also was ENGUERRAND CHARONTON, whose masterpiece, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, painted in 1453, is still in the hospital at Villeneuve-les-Avignon. Of its hundred figures is the donor with the mitre on his head, at the foot of the Cross. It is wrought in distemper upon a gold ground. Charonton was born at Laon; began to work at Avignon in 1447; came to wide repute, married, and was still working thereat in 1461. His art shows Italian influence.

The other great work of Avignon is the *Pietà* from Villeneuve-les-Avignon.

At the Bruges display of the works of Netherlandish Primitives in 1902 was a *Pietà*, or Dead Christ mourned by Holy Women, belonging to Baron Albenas, once given to Antonello da Messina, which has been the cause of much discussion. This

PAINTING

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

fine painting, which we may call the *Albenas Pietà*, has just that baffling sense of Flemish-French vision that makes the research into early French art so difficult. It is an astoundingly impressive work, in which serenity is painted and pathos suggested in profound fashion. The whole setting is French. It strongly savours of the utterance of the School of Avignon.

1500

CHAPTER II

OF THE CRADLE OF PAINTING IN FRANCE UNDER THE VALOIS

OF THE CRADLE OF PAINTING IN FRANCE UNDER THE VALOIS

FROM 1498, through the fifteen-hundreds, the Valois were lords of France: Louis XII, 1498 to 1515; François I, 1515 to 1547; Henri II, 1547 to 1559; François II, 1559 to 1560; Charles IX, 1560 to 1574; Henri III, 1574 to 1589; Henri IV, 1589 to 1610. The years of Charles VIII, Louis XII, François I, to the death of Henri IV, cover the age of what may be called the Renaissance in France—those years during which the Gothic art passed into the art into which the classic ideals entered. The art of painting, however, was less affected than were sculpture and architecture in France; not only was the painting chiefly limited to illuminations, but the Gothic intention was dominant. Indeed, we might almost disregard painting in these reigns as a national achievement, were it not that François I made the effort to create French painting, and thereby brought France the ambition so to do. But, strictly speaking, neither France nor England had a national school of artists in the fifteen-hundreds. The king and his Court called the Flemings from the Low Countries in the north, and the Italians from across the Alps to the south.

It is supposed that in 1500 there was a school of French painters akin to the Flemish—a school that the Renaissance destroyed. As we have seen, it is difficult to separate what French painters there had been in Charles VIII's years from the Flemish achievement. To begin with, the part of France that bred them was really then a part of Flanders, or closely in touch with Flanders. And perhaps the best way out of the difficulty is to call these men by the clumsy and somewhat misleading title of Franco-Flemish.

A HISTORY

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

Of the so-called Schools of DOUAI and of VALENCIENNES, it would be difficult to call them French, since neither town became French until later. BELLEJAMBE of Douai (1470?-1535), and MARMION of Valenciennes can scarcely therefore be called French, but rather Flemish.

FOUQUET was dead probably by 1481. The thirty-five years thereafter produced no painter of rank in France. It is true that Charles VIII called a colony of artists to his castle at Amboise, but there was no painter. He had brought several pictures from Naples. One or two of the great churchmen had brought pictures from Italy. But these were rare things. Benedetto Ghirlandaio was called to France awhile and painted an *Adoration of the Magi* in the Church of Aigueperse in Auvergne. Several artists were called from Italy to paint the frescoes in the Cathedral of Albi. Louis XII tried to lure Leonardo da Vinci to him. The Cardinal d'Amboise, Louis' famous minister, tried to lure Mantegna to his great castle of Gaillon which he designed in the Italian Renaissance style, with lodges, terraces, porticos, decorated with marble, and fountains and statues. There being no French artists capable of doing it, he called Solario from Milan to decorate the chapel with frescoes. It set the fashion. Dimier gives the famous Moulins triptych to these Italians working in France, as he also does the Brussels Madonna.

In 1515 François I came to the throne of France. With François I came a wide ambition to call painters to the decoration of the castles and great halls of the palaces of the king. With the coming of François came also a marked change in French art.

JEAN CLOUET
OR JANET
1475? - 1541

The first work given to JEAN CLOUET, called JANET, is dated about 1515. The Gothic disappears. His art is akin to that of Holbein and of Leonardo. Janet was a Fleming. He came

to the French Court with a marked Renaissance style and vision. The works given to him are so various that there is question as to their all being by him.

OF THE CRADLE OF PAINTING IN FRANCE UNDER THE VALOIS

Janet appears at the French Court in 1516, and calls himself Jean Clouet. He is known as Janet, Jeannet, Jehannet, Jamet, and Jehamet. On the death of Bourdichon in 1521, the name of Jamet is changed to Jehannet; and Janet takes the place of the dead man in the king's service. After 1525 he ousts Perréal from the royal favour. In 1528 Perréal's name vanishes from the king's accounts, and that of PETIT-JEAN CHAMPION takes his place. Janet was not only not a Frenchman, but was never naturalised. His name was probably CLOUWET. He came to high renown at the French Court. He became Groom of the Chamber to François I in 1516. Janet gave his whole art to the painting of small portraits, which in this king's reign came into a sudden and wide vogue, and enable us to know the features of the celebrities of the age. The numbers of these portraits of the personalities of the years of François I are astounding. And the vogue for them was to increase to enormous proportions during the fifteen-hundreds.

This rage for portraits had this drawback: a large number of copies were made, often by the most mediocre hands. Paintings and drawings were copied again and again—particularly the drawings which were bound up in family albums. But however bad the copies, they at least give a clue to hundreds of lost originals; and the vast number of these albums make a complete history of the art of the century.

The supreme master of this school was Jean Clouet; and in these albums the painting of France may be said definitely to begin.

The precious drawings of the *Preux de Marignan*, so called from containing the portraits of François I and seven companions —Gouffier de Boisy, his brother Admiral Bonnivet, Lautrec, La Palisse, Anne de Montmorency, the Sire de Fleuranges and the Sire de Tournon, the seven great men who fought beside François I at that famous battle—were by Janet. These, his

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

first-known works, were of about 1514; and he wrought his art until 1540. In 1540, or at latest 1541, Janet died. Although he made several of the portraits for the famous manuscript of *The Gallic War*, others were made by one who signs GODOFREDUS BATAVUS, a Dutchman, known in France as GUILLAUME GEOFFROY, and being a friend of Janet, it points to their both being Dutch. Janet had first gone to Tours, thence to Paris. Whether he was of the society of artists—sculptors, tapestry-makers, engravers, and painters of Tours under Babou de la Bourdaisière, founded thereat in 1502—is not known; but his wife was a daughter of a jeweller of Tours, Jeanne Boucault. Janet was at Tours in 1522; by 1529 he was settled, with his wife, in Paris. Even in his days at Tours his work was sought by the king. The *Gallic War* holds a portrait of *François I*—the painting made by Janet from it is lost—Chantilly has a poor copy of it. And in the same year in which he painted the king, 1519, he painted also the fine portrait of the little two-year-old *Dauphin François*, son to François I, now at Antwerp. The Agnew *Charlotte of France* was daughter to François I. The *François I* at the Louvre he painted five or six years later, in his thirtieth year—the king was born in 1496. In the *Méjanès Album* at Aix in Provence may be seen the Court of the king, with the comments of François I written below the portraits—biting or gallant, praising or otherwise; some of the fair beauties noted with an epigram not always chaste — amongst them *Diane de Poitiers* with the king's courteous phrase, "fair to see and virtuous to know"; *Mary of England* with "more dirty than queenly"; the fair *Assigny* with "the best-made of them all"; and *Agnes Sorel*, mistress to Charles VII, is there, she to whom at the time the credit was given of deliverance from England, not to Joan of Arc. Janet drew them all.

Then on the 24th of the February of 1525 came the disaster of the battle of Pavia, wherein the king fell by treason into Spanish captivity. Janet drew them all thereafter in the *Album of the King's Cabinet* of 1535. The king is now forty;

OF THE CRADLE OF PAINTING IN FRANCE UNDER THE VALOIS

the young bloods have grown beards; the women are no longer young. The old Court that was young has given place to a new Court, new beauties, a new queen—Eleanore, sister to the Emperor Charles v—new fashions in dress. Janet's art is richer. The Uffizi holds his *Duke Claude de Guise* (1530). Hampton Court has his painting of a *Man Unknown, holding a Volume of Petrarch.*

By the December of 1541 Janet was dead. We know that he stood godfather in the July of 1540. He painted an astounding picture of his age. Visiting the sitters in their homes, he drew them in coloured chalks with elaborate care—from his fine chalk drawings he painted their portraits in his studio. These drawings did for the French Court of François I what Holbein's did for the English of Henry VIII. Those twenty-five years of his working life at the French Court have left us a complete series of the portraits of the celebrated.

Nor did François I confine his love of the art of the Low Countries to the works of Janet—he bought peasant pictures by Bosch and by Breughel. He tried to lure Scorel (Schoorel) from Utrecht in vain. He called Joost van Cleef of Antwerp to the painting of the royal house. But Janet's only serious rivals he himself called to Court—the members of his own house—his brother CLOUET DE NAVARRE who went into the service of the king's sister, the Queen of Navarre, and his son FRANÇOIS CLOUET who was to come to fame as Clouet; both of whom were active during the last ten years of Janet's life.

The works of Jehan Clouet and of his son have for long been freely given to Holbein.

CHAPTER III

WHEREIN A SECOND CRADLE IS BROUGHT INTO FRANCE BY THE KING TO THE NURSING OF ART

THE ITALIAN MANNERISM ARRIVES AT FONTAINEBLEAU

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

BEFORE surveying the art of the younger Janet, whom we know better as François Clouet, we must turn awhile to the Italian invasion from the South.

The king, François I, though he looked to the Low Countries for portraiture, could find in Flanders no artist capable of painting on a large and ambitious scale the elaborate decorations he was now meditating. He turned to Italy. He desired to reproduce in France the glory of the great frescoes of Milan and Florence. He himself had a deep sense of art. He procured through the Pope the *St. Michael* and the *Madonna* by Raphael, now at the Louvre. He drew Leonardo da Vinci to France in 1516, and for his remaining three years Leonardo dwelt at Amboise on his famous estate of Le Clos. Leonardo, now painting with difficulty, brought with him his pupils Melzi, Andrea Salaino, and Battista de Villanis. And during those last three years of Leonardo's life, François spent much of his time at Amboise. On the 2nd of that May of 1519, on which the great soul of Leonardo passed away, François was at St. Germain, in his twenty-fifth year. A year before Leonardo died, the king called Andrea del Sarto to France. The world knows how, after a year, the year that Leonardo died, Del Sarto returned to Italy at his wife's desire; how the king entrusted him with monies to buy antiques at Rome; how Del Sarto squandered that money on his base wife. Andrea del Sarto's pupil Szuazzella remained behind in France. But with the great Italian masters the king had no luck—his heavy bribes could not keep them. Then came the defeat of La Bicocque,

the treason of the Constable of France, and thereafter the disaster of Pavia.

WHEREIN A SECOND CRADLE IS BROUGHT INTO FRANCE BY THE KING TO THE NURSING OF ART

Then, in 1531, the Italian Rosso (1494-1541) left Florence to decorate the Castle of Fontainebleau, to found the French School of allegory and history that was to come to fame as the SCHOOL OF FONTAINEBLEAU. The Florentine Bartolomeo Guetty, Nicolas Belin of Modena, later the Florentine Francesco Pellegrino, were three hacks much employed. The king, though thwarted by the political disasters of the years after Pavia, being come again into his own, thrust all his will into his artistic aims with renewed enthusiasm. Paintings, sculpture, and other works of art poured into France out of Italy. François I began the building of the Louvre palace in 1541; Henri II's queen, Catherine de Médici, the palace of the Tuileries in 1564; the two were connected by the Long Gallery afterwards.

At the death of Raphael his pupils scattered. Giulio Romano fled from Rome to escape the punishment for his obscene prints, and went to Mantua. Three years thereafter, in 1527, the Sack of Rome saw the horses of the Constable of Bourbon stabled in the halls that Raphael had decorated. The fame of Giulio Romano's works at Mantua filled Europe. The fame of the Florentine Michelangelesque, Rosso, was near as wide; he had gone to Rome, but the Sack sent him wandering with the others. The French king now called Rosso to his Court, and Rosso came in 1531; the following year the king lured Primaticcio from Mantua. And the king no longer wanted stray easel pictures; he called these men to the great design of decorating the Castle of Fontainebleau. Fontainebleau was his love; he began its great rebuilding in 1528; in 1531 he set the artists to work upon it; and in ten years he saw his dream realised. When the king spoke of "going home," men knew that the Court was going to Fontainebleau. Into his beloved home he poured all his art-treasures. Fontainebleau became François I—the style of its decorations created the "Fontainebleau style"—its school of design created the French "School of Fontainebleau."

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

Let us glance awhile at what this style was—it was to have a prodigious influence on the art of France.

Rosso was called in 1530, and was given the direction of the painting of the great gallery at Fontainebleau which was nearly completed by 1533. The Louvre holds the *Contest of the Muses and the Pierides*. Primaticcio (1504-1570) arrived in the spring of 1532; after 1533 he was at work upon the king's chamber. Rosso created a new style for France, unknown to Italy—those painted cartouches amidst a swirl of stucco ornamentation—those frescoed cartouches of gods and goddesses. Rosso had as assistants the Italians Pellegrino, Jean Antoine, the Flemings Joost Fouquet and Leonard Thiry, and the two Frenchmen BADOUIN and DORIGNY; Primaticcio had two Italian assistants, Belin known as Modena, and Miniato. Then came the fierce rivalry, of gossip tradition, between Rosso and Primaticcio, ending in the king's quarrel with Rosso, who poisoned himself in despair. As a matter of fact, so far from being rivals, they seem to have wrought their art in harmony, and Rosso's self-destruction was due to having had his assistant Pellegrino put to the torture on suspicion of having robbed him, and the shame resulting from the false accusation.

At the Louvre is Rosso's *Our Lady of Sorrows*, which gives a good example of his style; and at the Château d'Ancy-le-Franc is Primaticcio's *The Muses*, typical of his art.

Rosso lived in great favour and splendour, dying at forty-five, perhaps better known as Maître Roux. His sullen temper brought about his own death in 1541, the year of the death of the great Fleming Janet (Jean Clouet). He drew France away from illumination and glass-painting to a larger endeavour.

At Rosso's death Primaticcio came into supreme favour, and wrought his art thereafter for thirty years. Primaticcio came to his great influence, odd to say, at the same moment as the younger Janet, François Clouet. And, as in Rosso's time, the French development ran along two channels—the Italian under Rosso, and the Flemish under Janet; so now that development continued in two streams—the Italian under Primaticcio, and the

WHEREIN A SECOND CRADLE IS BROUGHT INTO FRANCE BY THE KING TO THE NURSING OF ART

Flemish under François Clouet. They were to hold the public favour side by side; and almost together they were to die on the eve of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.

That Primaticcio proceeded to spoil Rosso's work is pure invention. What he did do was to change his own style, weaving the grace and charm of Correggio about the design of Michelangelo. He decorated the chamber of the Duchesse d'Etampes, the king's mistress, whom François wedded to Jean de Brosse, whom the king created Duc d'Etampes on his marriage with the beautiful De Heilly. Thence Primaticcio went to the painting of the Grotto of the Garden of the Pine Trees; thence to the Room by the Porte-Dorée; thence to the Bathing Hall —in all of which he created those stories of the gods and goddesses which were to be the themes for the genius of France down to modern times.

Primaticcio was at work upon the Ulysses Gallery when François I died in 1547. During the reign of Henry II (1547-1559), he completed the Gallery. Primaticcio's industry was prodigious; he designed for the tapestry-weavers of Fontainebleau, for the enamellers of Limoges. His position at Court was as great as that of Lebrun was to be under Louis XIV. He was not only Groom of the Chamber, but from 1544 he drew the revenues of the Abbey of St. Martin in Troyes, hence his French name of ST. MARTIN. He kept the state and retinue of a noble.

At Wilton House is the Pembroke *Helen Swooning*, by him; and at Castle Howard the *Ulysses relating his Adventures to Penelope*, both discovered by Dimier, as being of his rare paintings.

In 1540 Cellini was called to France, and came. He gives a lying, boastful account of his career in France—to Primaticcio's disparagement. As a matter of fact, the king never commissioned him to make the great fountain, nor did he make it, for it is Primaticcio's work. And we dismiss his threats to the other to kill him if he did not surrender the work as part of his eternal braggart lying. In 1545 Cellini left, under the king's displeasure.

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

So Primaticcio wrought his art, assisted by a little army of artisans and a considerable group of artists, of whom were his four fellow-townsmen from Bologna — Cachenemis, Bagnacavallo, Fantose, and Baron (pupil to Costa). From Florence came Miniato, who hanged himself in 1548. Luca Penni did much work. The Fleming Thiry had considerable influence in the after years. Six Frenchmen wrought their art under Primaticcio—BADOUIN, DORIGNY, ROCHETEL, CARMOY, ROUGEMONT, and MUSNIER.

Then, in 1547, came death to François I. But the new king, Henri II, took up his father's aims in art, and there was no break at Fontainebleau; under Henri II the two streams of Flemish and Italian art continued to flow under Clouet and Primaticcio.

The Ulysses Gallery and the great Ballroom were carried out by Primaticcio. Niccolo dell' Abbate (1515-1571), better known as Messer Niccolo, was called from Modena, the third leading Italian that worked in France—at Fontainebleau, in 1552, he wrought beside Primaticcio. Primaticcio developed the arabesque ornament, or "grotesques" as they were then called, so typical of the Renaissance. So, out of Italy came Ulysses and Bacchus, Venus and Juno, and all the rest of the gods, and spread their Renaissance sham over the walls of France, and the vile, spotty, streaky, restless ornament of the Renaissance took possession of the land.

Henri II had not the same affection for Fontainebleau as his father, and was soon employing PHILIBERT DELORME to decorate Anet, the home of Diane de Poitiers, his favourite. However, Italian painting went on alongside of the French carving; and as the Italians went home again, fresh artists took their place. The noble house of Guise, then in high favour, lived in almost royal splendour, and all were handsome patrons of the arts—of this house, Charles, Cardinal of Lorraine, built his famous Grotto of Meudon, and called Primaticcio to its decoration. This Cardinal also called Salviati from Italy in 1554; and the house of Guise also called Bordone out of Italy. For

this noble family Primaticcio decorated their town palace, the Hôtel de Guise in Paris, which was afterwards to be taken down and rebuilt as the Hôtel de Soubise, and to be decorated by Boucher, and is now the home of the Archives of France. Living almost through the reigns of the two sons of Henri II—François II and Charles IX—Primaticcio died in 1570, leaving Niccolo supreme for a brief season, for he was to die the year thereafter, in 1571; and with his death ended the great Italian invasion that had spent its force upon Fontainebleau.

WHEREIN A SECOND CRADLE IS BROUGHT INTO FRANCE BY THE KING TO THE NURSING OF ART

A year after Niccolo, died François Clouet, in 1572; thus the two rival streams of art, the Flemish and Italian, ended two years before the death of Charles IX.

Now this work of Primaticcio at Fontainebleau was to mean much to France. He added grace and elegance to the art of Rosso—he founded his art on that of Giulio Romano, Michelangelo, and Correggio. He it was who chiefly dragged the alien gods into France. Primaticcio carried on some of Rosso's tricks, such as the elongation of the figures; but he brought a far more gracious art to France. This elongation is the sign of nearly all primitive schools, whether Flemish or Italian, whether Botticelli or Memlinc. So far, then, we cannot speak of a national French School of Fontainebleau—it was, until the end of the years of Henri II, absolutely Italian. Out of it was to grow the Italianesque French School of Fontainebleau, such as it was; and that is about all we can say for the alien thing.

GEOFFROY DOUMOUSTIER, a Frenchman, whose son, ETIENNE DOUMOUSTIER, became a fine portrait-painter, was formed in this Italian school. Born at Rouen, he was working for François I by 1538. The Louvre has a design for a window by him, the *Life of the Magdalene*. He is best known by his etchings. We have seen BADOUIN and DORIGNY working beside him. All are little more than names. Then we have seen working under Primaticcio the Frenchmen CARMOY, MUSNIER, and ROCHETEL.

PAINTING

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

To the mid-century belongs the famous JEAN COUSIN, of whom, however, little is definitely known. Coming from Sens, he is said to have had a brother of the same Christian name, a jeweller, and a son who was working in 1542, the year that Jean Cousin becomes a citizen of Paris, where he lived thereafter, and wrought, and died—between 1583 and 1595. As the name is very common in France, and he never won to any title, office, or distinction; as he is never once mentioned in any document of the time as being given work, it is difficult to follow his career. The Louvre has his *Last Judgment.* The *Book of Perspective* and the *Book of Lace*, a print of the *Brazen Serpent*, of the *Conversion of St. Paul*, and of a *Forge of Vulcan* complete his certain works. He stands revealed a pupil of Primaticcio. We may therefore take about the year 1552, with Cousin as its head, as the foundation of such French "School of Fontainebleau" as it is, steeped in the Michelangelesque Mannerism of Primaticcio. Primaticcio, at least, drew much from Nature; Niccolo seems to have discarded Nature—his *Chastity of Scipio* at the Louvre is a good example of his commonplace art; yet it must be remembered ever to Niccolo's credit that it was he who brought landscape to France, of which Stafford House is the happy possessor in the fine *Rape of Proserpine.* Dimier gives the Pembroke *Achilles with the Daughters of Lycomedes* at Wilton House to him, long given to Salviati.

For Catherine de Medici were created in 1562 the famous *Series of Artemesia*, pen-drawings touched up with Chinese white, intended for tapestries, and designed by several artists, of whom one was ANTOINE CARON of Beauvais. They were dull, finicking affairs, like most of the work of this school. Nor was PIERRE QUESNEL any better. Nor need we waste time on DUCERCEAU or ETIENNE DELANNE.

Such then was the state of French art when the Italians and Flemings passed away, and left France to her own devices.

Let us now follow the Flemish stream awhile that flowed beside this Italian Mannerism of Primaticcio.

CHAPTER IV

WHEREIN THE GENIUS OF THE FRENCH PORTRAIT DIES OF TERROR OF THE BELLS OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

CLOUET
1500?–1572

WHEREIN THE GENIUS OF THE FRENCH PORTRAIT DIES OF TERROR OF THE BELLS OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

Of François Clouet, son to Janet and his wife, Joan Boucault, the date of birth at Tours is not known; but he was already famous by 1541, at his father's death, and was probably working by 1530. His drawings date from 1534. Pupil to his father, Clouet was to carry his art to greater heights.

Under François I Clouet, at his father's death, took that father's place as portrait-painter in the king's favour. In the December of 1541 we find the king renouncing the estate of the dead Janet, which came to the Crown on the death of a foreigner, for the benefit of the artist's son. Clouet was sole painter to the king until 1546, when the famous enameller of Limoges, Léonard Limousin, became his colleague.

From 1534 to his death in 1572, the younger Janet—François Clouet—created a large number of drawings and paintings of the personages of the day. He was to live through four reigns, and he has left behind him the record of each king with his queen, princes, princesses, and courts. The Uffizi and the Louvre have copies of Clouet's lost *François I on Horseback.* Versailles has the young *Catherine de Medici as Dauphine.* On the death of the king, Clouet painted the death-mask which had been taken of François I.

On the death of François I, Clouet was appointed painter to Henri II.

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

The reign of Henri II was one long triumph for Clouet. He painted *Henri II* twice—a large equestrian portrait before 1558, and in 1559 the full-length at the Uffizi. At Chantilly are several drawings of *Madame Marguerite*, the king's sister, at different ages.

By 1551 Clouet was come to considerable wealth, as his will, made in that year, proves. He was living in his own house in the Rue Sainte Avoye, a bachelor, with two illegitimate daughters, Diana and Lucretia. In 1562 he painted the apothecary *Pierre Quthe*.

And now, in the years of Henri II, a group of French painters of the portrait began to arise round Clouet, to whom became assistant BOUTELOUP, who entered the king's service in 1548—he was a native of Blois. William Bouteloup worked under Clouet from 1547 to 1572; but already, in 1536, he was painter to the Dauphin, François of Angoulême. He also assisted Primaticcio and Rosso. In 1560 he drew the portrait of the Constable Montmorency's Fool, *Thonyn*, now at Chantilly.

GERMAIN LEMANNIER painted several portraits of the young princes and princesses.

NICOLAS DENISOT, a wealthy man, of the noble house of Perche, was Comte d'Alsinois, and an orator and poet. He died in 1559.

JEAN SCIPION, painter to Catherine de Medici.

ETIENNE DUMOÛTIER or DUMOUSTIER, the first of a famous family of portrait-painters, was born in 1520.

Then there is THE ARTIST OF 1550, the unknown author of the *Jeanne d'Albret, Queen of Navarre*.

The reign of Henri II is prodigiously rich in albums of portraits. Added to this was the new vogue for enamel portraits, which, begun in the years of François I, became a craze in his son's years. The famous enameller, Léonard Limousin, went to the Janets for his portraits.

Henri II died in 1559, and Clouet painted his death-mask as he had done that of his father.

WHEREIN THE GENIUS OF THE FRENCH PORTRAIT DIES OF TERROR OF THE BELLS OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

Catherine de Medici now became mistress of France, regent for her two sons. Although she appointed an Italian to the "directorship of the King's Buildings," her love of portraits drew her to shower her favour upon Clouet. There was a wide vogue for galleries of portraits of celebrities arranged in order and sequence, a craze which came out of Italy. The Cabinet of Prints at the Louvre has four chalk-drawings by Clouet for the queen's collection—*Catherine as Widow*; the young king *François II*; his brother *Charles in Infancy*, afterwards Charles IX; and *Mary Stuart*, Queen of Scots, famous for its miniature at Windsor, given in the inventory of Charles I of England to Janet.

This portraiture was almost wholly wrought by the Flemish school of France.

The boy king François II died in 1560, the year after he came to the throne; and his boy brother, Charles IX, reigned in his stead. Thus Catherine de Medici was to know a long lease of sovereignty. *Mary Stuart* again sat to Clouet for the famous drawing "in white mourning." The painting is lost, but there are many copies. Of the same year is the ten-year-old *Charles IX*, the painting of which is at Vienna and the drawing at the Louvre. Chantilly has the fine wash-drawing of the six-year-old *Marguerite of France*, afterwards Queen of Navarre, wife to Henri IV. She sat again to Clouet at sixteen for the chalk-drawing at the Louvre, as did the king, *Charles IX*, on his marriage in 1570 with Elizabeth of Austria. Clouet painted the young king twice at this time—the life-size portrait at Vienna at twenty, and the miniature at the Louvre, one of Clouet's supreme works. The large portrait at Vienna is signed "Janet," his only known signature, and of the year 1569. Two years thereafter (1571) Clouet painted his masterpiece of the young queen, *Elizabeth of Austria*, which is one of the treasures of the Louvre—where also is the chalk-drawing. Clouet's work was near done. The drawing of the *Duchesse de Bouillon* and the last portrait of *Charles IX*, in two drawings by Clouet, the painting only known from copies—the king has fallen into

sickness and melancholy—and Clouet's days are numbered. He had been living in the Rue Sainte Avoye, in the Temple quarter, hard by the Hôtel de Guise, under the patronage of De Boisy, one of whose several wives, *Claude de Beaune*, he painted in the portrait now at the Louvre; the drawing is at Chantilly.

It must not be forgotten that several lost miniatures were also painted by Clouet. Of the host of portraits wildly given to Clouet at Versailles, undoubted works by him are the *Anne d'Este*, *Duchesse de Guise*, and the *Jeanne d'Albret*. The Cook *Portrait of a Lady in her Bath*, by François Clouet, is a remarkable example.

There is no question that Charles IX, whether insane or half-sane, had a genuine affection for, and trust in, his great Huguenot admiral, the noble Coligny; and Coligny boldly told the young king that Catherine de Medici was a danger to the State. On the marriage of Henry of Navarre Catherine decided with cold-blooded calculation to destroy Coligny. The marriage of Henri of Navarre with Marguerite de Valois was celebrated on the 18th of August 1572. The house of Guise stirred up the populace against the Huguenot party. Three days thereafter Maurevert, the hired assassin of the Duke of Guise, fired from a window but only wounded Coligny, who calmly pointed out the window to his body-guard, and straightway sent to the young king who, though he was playing tennis with the Duke of Guise, went at once to Coligny. Catherine saw that she must strike or all was lost. After a hurried consultation with the Guise faction, they went to the king and prevailed upon him to destroy Coligny and the Huguenot leaders. He swore in one of his mad paroxysms that if so, then every Huguenot must die. The Catholics lost no time. At the second hour after midnight, on the 24th of August 1572, the Eve of St. Bartholomew, the bell of St. Germain l'Auxerrois rang out the signal of death to all Huguenots; every church took up the summons; and as the city rang with bells, a light was set in every window, and the Catholics swarmed out into

I

FRANÇOIS CLOUET

1500? – 1572

ELIZABETH OF AUSTRIA"

(Louvre)

WHEREIN THE GENIUS OF THE FRENCH PORTRAIT DIES OF TERROR OF THE BELLS OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

the streets, fully armed, with white crosses in their hats, to attack every house marked overnight with the sign that a Huguenot dwelt therein. Henry of Guise went to the house of Coligny, and sent his assassin to the sleeping admiral's bedroom, where he was stabbed as he slept—his body being flung into the courtyard below, at the feet of Guise, to prove that no mistake had been made. It was the beginning of a ghastly butchery that lasted until nightfall; men, women, and children were slain without mercy. Catherine and the Court watched the butchery from the windows of the Louvre; Charles himself, in mad frenzy, shooting at any fugitive who attempted to escape along the quays of the river. At night the miserable king gave the order to cease the massacre, but the fury raged for several days, and the butchery went through France. Charles called the Parliament, boldly said he had ordered the massacre to destroy a conspiracy against himself and France, and received a vote of thanks. A solemn procession was instituted to take place on every St. Bartholomew's Eve; and at Rome the news was received with frantic joy by the Pope and cardinals, who went in state to thank Heaven for the great mercy.

The following month, on the 22nd of September 1572, the king's painter, François Janet, called Clouet, died. Whether the tale of his terror at the massacre, he being a Protestant, being the cause of his death, be true or not, it is likely enough that he feared attack, for in his will he subscribes to the Catholic faith.

Clouet left a mighty legacy of portraiture to France, and his rare Flemish vision kept the eyes of France from the narrow outlook within Italian blinkers.

Whilst the Massacre of St. Bartholomew was raging, Charles IX had sent for Henri of Navarre and the Prince Condé and given them their choice between death and the Mass. The two princes doggedly refused to renounce their faith; but some weeks afterwards they consented to an outward conformity to the Church. But the massacre failed in aweing the Huguenots, who rose in La Rochelle; and all efforts of

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

the king's brother, the Duke of Anjou, failed to reduce the city. During the siege, Anjou became King of Poland, and before going he came to terms with the Huguenots, who were early come to their old power again, and were soon in alliance with the moderate Catholics, the leaders of whom were the three sons of the dead Constable Montmorency and the gallant La Noue, with the youngest brother of the king, the Duke of Alençon, at their head, to whom came Henri of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and Prince Louis of Nassau. The cowardice of d'Alençon betrayed the confederacy, and Catherine de Medici struck at it with her wonted despatch. But the king had had enough of murder; he balked Catherine's desire for the death of Henri of Navarre, his sister's husband. Charles IX had never been the same man since the Massacre; the superstitious gazed with horror upon his bed constantly saturated with blood—for he was now rapidly dying from consumption. His last days were an agony of remorse; and his terror was terrible. He died on the 30th of May 1574, two years after his painter Clouet; and at his death the great Italian and Flemish invasion of art into France was passed away.

In the Italian Mannerisms of Fontainebleau you shall find no living thing, no poetic sense of France. But in the art of Clouet there passes before us the pageant of the age—and each figure of that age flits before us in his and her habit as they lived. Clouet, or Janet the Younger, never married; and his natural daughters became nuns. His sister Catherine who had married one Abel Foulon, had a son BENJAMIN FOULON, who became pupil to Clouet and carried on his art.

One of the greatest portrait-painters of the age of Clouet was—

CORNEILLE DE LYON

1500? – 1574-5

When François I died, there had been settled some ten years at Lyons a Fleming from the Hague, who was to become known as CORNEILLE OF LYONS, already come to considerable fame as a portrait-painter. Probably on the visit of François

WHEREIN THE GENIUS OF THE FRENCH PORTRAIT DIES OF TERROR OF THE BELLS OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

to Lyons in 1536 the king became interested in him, for, in that year, Corneille painted each of the king's two children—the *Dauphin François* who died in 1536, and *Madeleine* (now at Versailles). The Pierpont Morgan *Duke of Orleans*, afterwards Henri II, is said to be by Corneille. The Versailles *Beatrice Pacheco*, maid of honour to Queen Eléanore; the Knowsley *Man Unknown*; and the fine *Jean, Sire de Rieux, Baron de Chateauneuf*, were the best known of the works of Corneille, who, on the 7th of January 1541, was made painter to the Dauphin (afterwards Henri II), who, on coming to the throne, naturalised Corneille in 1547, from which time he entered the king's household. About this time there came out of Antwerp, from pupilage to Peter Aartsen (Lange Peer), the Fleming Van der Straet to study with Corneille. In 1548 Corneille painted *Catherine de Medici*, the new queen; and *Madame Marguerite*, sister to Henri II, she who became Duchess of Savoy—the portrait is now at Chantilly, dated 1548. Chantilly is rich in portraits by Corneille. Versailles has the *Suzanne d'Escars, Dame de Pompadour*, and the Louvre the wrongly titled *Lorenzo de Medici.* The costume of the reign of Henri II proves that a large number of Corneille's portraits were of this reign. Unlike the Clouets, Corneille made no chalk drawings for his portraits. He made the drawings the base for his painting; and often painted them in distemper on paper, varnishing them over like oil panels.

Chantilly has a portrait of *Madame de Martigné-Briant* by Corneille, and at Althorp are *two portraits* by him, wrongly given to Janet, one of which is wrongly called *Mary Stuart.*

Corneille preferred always the three-quarter face.

Far from Clouet, at the other end of France, Corneille lived his career. In 1569 Corneille, his wife and his daughter and his servants—like all the Huguenots of Lyons—renounced their faith and became Catholics under the terror that was abroad. Corneille died about 1574, leaving the world soon after Clouet, in the year that his tormented and afflicted king, Charles IX, went to his judgment.

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

Fortunately, a collector, Roger de Gaignières, gave himself up to collecting the small portraits of Corneille at Lyons, where in his day they were chiefly to be found. This collection came to Louis XIV about 1711. Unfortunately it was sold and scattered in 1717; but the Marquis de Torcy put his seal on the panels, which has since added to the identification of many. Versailles and Chantilly are rich in him. He painted small, and with high finish and great delicacy, generally on a green ground. He also painted the portrait very directly on to the darkish ground, in solid fashion.

Corneille left a son Corneille, and a daughter who is said to have "painted divinely well"; but if we are to judge of the School of Lyons that grew about Corneille by such work as remains—as that of MARTELLANGE—it was beneath contempt.

Of other French portrait-painters of Clouet's later years, besides BOUTELOUP and ETIENNE DUMOUSTIER, was the Huguenot MARC DUVAL, called also LE SOURD and BERTIN, which was his stepfather's name. Painting in oils, he was an engraver besides; he was master to the Fleming Spranger. Duval is said to have been pupil to Clovio. His most famous work is the well-known engraving of *The Three Colignys*, in which stand together the three brothers Admiral Coligny, Dandelot, and the Cardinal de Châtillon, dated 1579, from which many paintings were made in Protestant countries—the original drawing is at the Louvre, where also is a drawing of the head of *Coligny* by him. Chantilly has a chalk-drawing of *Antoine, King of Navarre.*

Another portraitist was GEORGES VENITIEN, who was either a Fleming called GEORGES BOMBARE, or an Englishman called BUNBURY. He painted the *Cardinal de Lorraine* at Rheims.

The artist of the chalk-drawings of the *Lecurieux Album* is unknown; amongst them, however, is a drawing by Foulon of the infant prince *César, Duc de Vendôme*, son of Henri IV and the beautiful *Gabrielle.* The thirty-eight drawings by the unknown master were designed after Clouet's death, and the Louvre has

two paintings by him—a *Woman Unknown* and a *Diane d'Angoulême*, natural daughter to Henry II; whilst the Wallace has two miniatures by him—the *Duc de Retz* and a *Woman Unknown*. Of the Louvre Collection is a drawing of *Du Gast*, the king's chamberlain. The names in the album were written to the portraits by Clouet's nephew Foulon.

WHEREIN THE GENIUS OF THE FRENCH PORTRAIT DIES OF TERROR

Of the other Flemings working in France were CORNELIS KETEL, HIERONYMUS FRANCK, AMBROISE FRANCK or Francken, and LUCAS DE HEERE of Ghent—who all painted historical pieces, not portraits.

CHAPTER V

WHEREIN WE SEE THE CRADLE OF FONTAINEBLEAU BRING FORTH A FEEBLE FOLK UNDER THE LAST OF THE VALOIS

THE SCHOOL OF FONTAINEBLEAU UNDER HENRI III

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

At the death of Charles IX, his brother, the new king, Henri III, once Duke of Anjou, and at the time King of Poland, hurried out of Cracow secretly at midnight, deserting his Polish people, and, pursued by his angry subjects to the frontier, escaped into Moravia and made for Venice, where he gave himself up to wild debauchery for awhile. He entered France on the 5th of September 1574, was met by the Queen-Regent Catherine de Medici at Lyons, whither the King of Navarre and the Duc d'Alençon, now set at liberty, also went. Here he declared war on the Huguenots, who promptly began to conspire rebellion. A frivolous, effeminate, and shameless man, Henri III was ever an object of contempt and disdain to his people. Intensely religious, black with superstition, he neglected all serious business, and gave himself up to appalling orgies. He married Louise de Vaudemont, of a younger branch of the house of Lorraine, which increased the power of the house of Guise ; and the Catholics taking the famous Henri, Duke of Guise, as their lord—that young duke found himself the leader against the Huguenots at the same time the chief enemy of his king, so great was the tangle. Then followed the bloody intrigues that made of France in this reign one vast cockpit of disasters—the Huguenots formed their league in 1575, under the Prince of Condé, with the liberal Catholics ; the Duc d'Alençon joined it; then Henri of Navarre, shaking himself from sloth and debauch, escaped from Paris under plea

WHEREIN WE SEE THE CRADLE OF FONTAINE-BLEAU BRING FORTH A FEEBLE FOLK UNDER THE LAST OF THE VALOIS

of hunting, and joined it. He was to enter Paris again only as King of France. The king, baffled between the Huguenot League and the Catholic League created by the Duc de Guise, realised that Guise and Henri of Navarre were now the claimants to his succession. D'Alençon, who had become Duc d'Anjou, went into Flanders, but by his folly he got foul of the people, was obliged to flee from France, and only returned home to die. The king found himself at war with the Catholic League. Henri of Navarre promptly countered the house of Guise by allying himself with the king. But the advance of Guise frightened the king, who promptly surrendered, and handed over all great offices to the Guise faction. The Pope excommunicated Henri of Navarre. It brought out all Navarre's great gifts of leadership. The king, with Guise, advanced against the Huguenots. Henri of Navarre overthrew the royal host at Coutras in the Perigord, but took no advantage of the victory, hastening off to his mistress the Countess de Grammont, to find his German allies defeated. However, the king returned to Paris to find the Duc de Guise hailed by the populace. Then came the duel for power between King Henri and Guise that ended in the insurrection of the Barricades, in which Guise was completely victorious. King Henri, in terror at the Louvre, sent the Queen-mother to negotiate with the conqueror ; and Catherine de Medici, with all her skill, could not reduce the terms of Guise to less than those of a conqueror. During the negotiations, King Henri leaped to horse with his attendants, galloped through a few musket-shots from the gates, and rode for Chartres. A peace was patched up ; but King Henri's assurances covered a deadly hate. He went to Blois and found himself treated with open insolence. Henry realised what the insolence of the Guise faction meant. He realised that a dungeon might end his own days. He decided that Guise must die. He did not dare to bring him to trial. He fell back on assassination. His first gentleman of the chamber, Loignac, and eight others, fell upon the duke on his coming to a private interview with the king.

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

The Cardinal of Lorraine was at once arrested and slain in prison. On the 5th of January 1589 died Catherine de Medici. The Blois assassination caused consternation throughout France. Paris rose and declared the throne forfeit. The king, at first dismayed, withdrew to Tours; and the royalists rallied to him. He appealed to Henri of Navarre and the Huguenots, and found himself at the head of a great host. Navarre drove all before him. On the 30th of July 1589 Henry was at St. Cloud, Navarre and the Huguenots lying near him at Meudon. Paris was in terror. A young and ignorant Dominican monk, Jacques Clement, was persuaded to the murder of the king—he got by trickery to the king's camp, reached the king's apartments, and stabbed him in the stomach. With Henri III died the last of the Valois.

As Henri III lay dying he appointed Henri of Navarre his heir; Navarre entered Paris as Henri IV of France in 1589, the great king of the house of Bourbon.

It will be seen that art under such anarchy could grow but ill. Henri III, for all his faults, was an art-lover; and at Venice he had been fascinated by the great art of that city.

Niccolo dell' Abbate had died in 1571, leaving his son Giulio Camillo dell' Abbate, Roger de Rogery, and Niccolo's kinsman Cristoforo dell' Abbate in the king's service. Giulio Camillo dell' Abbate, on his father's death, became director of Fontainebleau.

Meantime, ANTOINE CARON, the historical painter, advanced in the royal favour. In 1573 he, with GERMAIN PILON, managed the fêtes for the entry of the Duc d'Anjou into Paris, as King-elect of Poland. His three daughters married artists, two of whom were famous engravers, THOMAS DE LEU, LÉONARD GAUTIER, and PIERRE GOURDELLE. All four men were hot for the League and bitterly inimical to the Protestant artists of whom we have already been treating. De Leu engraved portraits.

Another painter of the time was HENRI LERAMBERT, of the family of sculptors who flourished from this age to the reign of

Louis XIV. And Pierre Quesnel and Cousin were still living. Henri III favoured JACQUES PATIN, whose drawings of the marriage of the king's brother-in-law, the Duc de Joyeuse, in 1581, are well known. Painter to the king, Patin left no paintings that are known to us.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE CRADLE OF FONTAINEBLEAU BRING FORTH A FEEBLE FOLK UNDER THE LAST OF THE VALOIS

Two new Italians joined the Fontainebleau group—Giacomo Romano, and Giovanni dell' Abbate, known as Jean Labbé, probably the son of Cristoforo dell' Abbate, and as probably the artist of the pen-drawings of the *Life of St. Bartholomew* at the Louvre.

Another artist of the days of Henri III was BOLLERY or BAULLERY, the designer of the series of the *Tournament of Sandricourt*; he was JÉRÔME BOLLERY, father of NICOLAS BOLLERY, whose nephew was to become the painter JACQUES BLANCHARD.

All these painters of Henri III were feeble folk.

At the same time it must be remembered that, from the time of Henri II, the School of Fontainebleau had a prodigious reputation throughout Europe. The North looked to it with awe as the place to which Italian art had come to a new blossoming. It began to create a vogue. Unfortunately for Flemish art, the Flemish painters began to turn eager eyes towards Fontainebleau as towards Italy. Mabuse, Schorel, Van Orley, Lambert Lombard, and others were turning to Italy, and preferring Italian art as it filtered through France. At the end of the fifteen-hundreds, the Italianised Flemings indeed went to Fontainebleau rather than to Italy. Primaticcio set the vogue of decoration largely in England also, as shown by the large stucco decorations such as those at Hardwick Hall. In London there was quite a trade in French prints of the Fontainebleau designs.

PORTRAIT-PAINTERS UNDER HENRI III

On the death of François Clouet, his pupil JEAN DECOURT was made painter to the king. Decourt is famous for his

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

enamel portraits. The enamel of *Madame Marguerite*, Duchess of Savoy, as Minerva, at the Wallace, is well known, dated 1555. SUSANNE DECOURT also worked in enamel. However, enamels were the work only of Decourt's earlier years; after he was made painter to the king he painted portraits. Chantilly has a fine *Duke of Anjou*, afterwards Henri III (1573) by him—long thought to be D'Alençon. The chalk-drawing is at the Louvre.

JEAN DECOURT had a son CHARLES DECOURT, who also won the favour of Henri III, and was made groom of the chamber as well as given the title of painter to the king in 1582.

There was also painting for the king one NICOLAS BELON, who may have been NICOLAS LEBLOND.

At the same time there were painting portraits at the Court of Navarre several artists whom Henri of Navarre employed before he became Henri IV of France—all grooms of the chamber. Of these were MARC DUVAL and BUNEL, both Huguenots. Duval painted *Henri of Navarre* in 1578. FRANÇOIS BUNEL of Blois is not mentioned after 1590; he had a son who was to come to fame. The famous *Henri IV in Infancy* at Versailles is supposed to be by François Bunel, who is said to have painted *Admiral Drake.*

The chalk-portraits in this reign became an absolute craze, and were made for their own sake, apart from the idea of sketches for paintings; these became highly finished, and were to reach to high achievement in the hands of the Dumoustiers. At the same time, the chalk copies of portraits for albums gave way to engraved portraits.

There were at the Court of France a large number of Flemish portraitists. Hieronymus Franck, Vander Mast, George of Ghent (George Vander Straeten, pupil to Frans Floris). Some superb drawings were made in portraiture by unknown Flemings of this time.

CHAPTER VI

WHEREIN HENRI OF NAVARRE FAILS TO BRING GENIUS TO FONTAINEBLEAU, EVEN FROM FLANDERS, BUT THE PORTRAIT FLOURISHES

THE SCHOOL OF FONTAINEBLEAU UNDER HENRI IV

1539 — 1610

WHEREIN HENRI OF NAVARRE FAILS TO BRING GENIUS TO FONTAINEBLEAU, EVEN FROM FLANDERS, BUT THE PORTRAIT FLOURISHES

With Henri of Navarre entering Paris as Henri IV there came a power to France that was to end the anarchy. The land settled under the man whom it recognised as a master; and art came out, bringing to Fontainebleau what is known as the Second School of Fontainebleau.

It was never a great school; but it was to have consequences. In 1594 Henri of Navarre accepted the Catholic faith and brought back peace to France. Henri IV was moved by the whim to bring back splendour to Fontainebleau. Odd to say, he was to create the new school—a school more akin to the French genius—by calling Flemish artists to Fontainebleau. These Flemings appear about 1595.

Between the siege of Henri III in Paris by the League and the time that Henri IV was settled in the seat of sovereignty, the arts must have been sent flying; so that with Henri IV we may look upon a new group of artists as being risen in the land. Henri IV was soon employing a very large group of artists, for he was decorating not only Fontainebleau, but the Louvre, the Tuileries, and St Germain-en-Laye. Twenty important artists, with their swarms of assistants, were at work upon these various palaces at the same time.

The first to be employed was Toussaint Dubreuil, who had been painting in 1588. Henri's beautiful mistress Gabrielle d'Estrées, the famous Duchesse de Beaufort and de

Monceaux, was lodged at Fontainebleau. Dubreuil was employed to paint the series of gods and goddesses thereat. He also painted at St. Germain a large series of works, and at the Louvre. Dubreuil died in 1602. Probably founding his art on that of Primaticcio, he had his master's habit of designing rather than painting the decorations; and we know that he employed Flemings to do that painting, of whom were Artus Flamand, Hieronymus Franck, Jean Dhoey, Josse de Voltigeant, Ambroise Dubois and Thierry Aertsen (son of Lange Pieter).

Dubois, born at Antwerp, became one of the chief painters of the School of Fontainebleau. He painted the king's mistress, Gabrielle d'Estrées, as Diana with hounds and Cupids. He designed the decorations of the Diana Room at Fontainebleau. He, like Dubreuil, painted in the style of Primaticcio. The king was also employing Dubreuil to design for the tapestry-weavers.

In 1600 the king married Marie de Medici.

At the Louvre is a *Baptism of Clorinda* by Dubois; at Fontainebleau a *Clorinda before Soliman* and the *Birth of Clorinda*. Of the fifteen scenes from the Romance of Theagenes and Chariclea, one is at the Louvre and three are at Fontainebleau. Dubois died in 1614.

There was also at the Court a painter of landscape, Etienne Dupérac, landscapes with ruins and monuments. Long at Rome, he was in France in 1578, dying there in 1604, two years after Dubreuil.

Josse de Voltigeant, a Fleming like Dubois, worked at Fontainebleau.

Jan Dhoey, grandson to Lucas van Leyden, appears at Fontainebleau in 1595. His eldest son, Charles Dhoey, became a painter also. Jan Dhoey died in 1615.

Jacques Bunel, son of François Bunel, the portrait-painter to Navarre, was employed on decorative painting at the Louvre. He was born at Blois, and came to Paris.

At the Louvre also were working Pasquier Testelin, Jean Debrie, Guillaume Dumée, and Gabriel Honnet.

WHEREIN HENRI OF NAVARRE FAILS TO BRING GENIUS TO FONTAINEBLEAU, EVEN FROM FLANDERS, BUT THE PORTRAIT FLOURISHES

At the death of Dubreuil, the designing of tapestries was given to HENRI LERAMBERT. He died in 1610. His office thereafter was shared by DUMÉE and LAURENT GUIOT.

NICOLAS BOLLERY, the son of Jérôme Bollery, was married in 1584, and was famous for his night effects, masquerades, and pastorals in the style of Bassano. As he "had the air of a great lord," and "rode on horseback followed by a groom," he clearly came to high repute in his day.

In 1608 the roof of the chapel of the Trinity at Fontainebleau was put into the charge of MARTIN FRÉMINET, the subjects of course being Scriptural. Fréminet had been to Italy. He was back in France about 1603; he died in 1619. Orleans has several of his works, painted in the Florentine style.

In 1610 died Henri IV.

So far, France can scarcely be said to have created any national painting of the imagination whatsoever. Her best work is in portraiture.

THE PORTRAIT UNDER HENRI IV

The years of Henri IV are chiefly remarkable for the fine portraiture of the two families of DUMOUSTIER and of QUESNEL, and further exquisite work of the unknown artist who signed the initials I. D. C. We have now a marked French feeling of subtlety and grace, which, whilst it is based on the Flemish genius of the Janets, father and son, perhaps more upon Clouet than his father, develops that subtle sense of giving the French character without any Flemish suggestion.

THE DUMOUSTIERS

We have seen old GEOFFREY DUMOUSTIER come upon the scene in Henri II's day; and his son ETIENNE DUMOUSTIER follow him, working into the years of Henri of Navarre—he had been painter to the king under Henri II, under François II, under Charles IX, under Henri III, under Catherine de Medici, and now he was painter to the king under Henri IV, a very old man. Etienne died in 1603, in his eighty-third year.

He had a younger brother, Côme Dumoustier, painter to Catherine de Medici and to the king, and his fame also was very wide.

Pierre Dumoustier, son to Etienne, came to manhood in Henry IV's reign.

Daniel Dumoustier, son to Côme, born in 1570, would therefore be about twenty when Henri IV came to power. Both Pierre and Daniel were to know fame for close upon half a century of the sixteen-hundreds. Indeed, the name of Dumoustier came, in the French mind, to stand for fine portraiture in chalks, just as, for ages, every painted portrait was labelled Clouet. Thomas de Leu engraved many portraits after Pierre Dumoustier. Daniel Dumoustier drew a fine portrait of *Gabrielle d'Estrées* about 1600, the year she died. But the supreme artist of this distinguished family was Pierre Dumoustier. He was a restless fellow, roamed into Flanders in 1603, and is said to have gone to England. At the Louvre are portraits of *James I* and his queen, *Anne of Denmark*. His father Etienne died in 1603. Pierre eventually settled in Italy. Daniel remained, dying about 1646. After Daniel died, Pierre came back to France, an old man of ninety, and died six years thereafter in Paris in 1656.

THE QUESNELS

François Quesnel and Nicholas Quesnel were the sons of the artist Pierre Quesnel, to whom they were born in Edinburgh when Pierre was in James V's service there. François, not yet fifty when Henry IV came to the throne, created his best work in this reign. Thomas de Leu engraved eight portraits after him. He was painter to the king. In 1602 he painted a full length of *Louis XIII in Infancy*. The Louvre has a fine *Henrietta d'Entragues* by him, amongst others, in which he reveals great delicacy of touch and exquisite gifts.

The art of Nicholas Quesnel, to judge by his portrait of his father made in 1574, and signed, was of no great order; he died in 1632.

WHEREIN HENRI OF NAVARRE FAILS TO BRING GENIUS TO FONTAINEBLEAU, EVEN FROM FLANDERS, BUT THE PORTRAIT FLOURISHES

There was working in these years also that nephew of Clouet called BENJAMIN FOULON, though he never came to high achievement. He died about 1612. Another painter of good stock, but whose work, unlike that of the mediocre Foulon, is not known, was CHARLES DECOURT, son of Jean Decourt. He died in 1614. Amongst the group of commonplace artists were DARLAY, JEAN RABEL of Beauvais, ANTOINE DE RECOUVRANCE and NICOLAS LEDIGNE of Champagne. Darlay is best known by his portrait of Henri II's sister Catherine, engraved by De Leu. RABEL engraved as well as being a painter. De Leu engraved his portrait of *Drake* at forty-three (1583). Rabel also painted flowers; he died in 1603.

ANTOINE DE RECOUVRANCE was painter to the king from 1588. LEDIGNE drew portraits in chalk, and was a poet, who called himself Sieur de Condé ; he died about 1614.

But there is one man, his name unknown, though his initials remain, who ranks with the Clouets and Pierre Dumoustier—the MASTER I. D. C. He drew the two chalk-portraits of the beautiful *Gabrielle d'Estrées*, the *Madame de Carnavalet*, *Claude du Bellay*, abbot of Savigny, *Mademoiselle d'Urfé*, and five *Unknown Men* at the Louvre, besides the portrait said to be that of his own wife on which the initials appear. The work is very beautiful, consummate in draughtsmanship, and subtle in character. He loved to swing the head to three-quarter face, and then make the eyes gaze at the spectator. Through all his art the stiff Flemish severity has given way to French grace, subtlety, and exquisite sense of style.

There was now creeping into French portraiture the Italian vision. At Chantilly *Charles IX* and the *Duc d'Alençon* caracole on horseback, and royal robes are flung about kings and princesses in the grand manner. JACQUES BUNEL, who died in 1614, and LOUIS POISSON employ this style. Poisson, painter to the king from 1596, worked at St. Germain and Fontainebleau. The Louvre has a drawing of such a state portrait of *Henri IV* by Bunel.

POURBUS, the Fleming, came to supreme position as portrait-

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

painter to Henri IV. The Louvre has his portrait of *The Queen.* He came to the Court soon after 1600, and lived until 1622, carrying on the Italianised Flemish impetus well into the reign of Louis XIII. Pourbus put an end to the style of portrait created by the Clouets. When old Pierre Dumoustier lay down and died in 1646, the whole style of the fifteen-hundreds died with him.

In that year of 1610 in which Henri of Navarre, the great King of France, signed the treaty of Halle—whereby he undertook to support the Princes of Brandenburg and Neuburg in their claim to the lands of the dead Duke of Cleves, and thereby fell foul of Austria, Spain, and Milan—though Henri of Navarre was no longer a young man, the adulterous blood of the Bourbons still rioted hot within him. He became enamoured of the beautiful Charlotte de Montmorency, wife of Henri, Prince of Condé. His reckless pursuit of the girl sent Condé and his Princess to seek refuge at the Viceregal Court of the Archduke Albrecht at Brussels. Navarre threatened war unless the beautiful girl were given up. The priests and more violent partisans of Rome leaped at the scandal to excite the people against the tolerant king who had passed into law the Edict of Nantes, vowing that he was plotting the overthrow and dethronement of the Pope, the end of Catholicism, and the making of the Huguenots supreme in France. Henri of Navarre, before hurrying to take command of the army of the North at Châlons, made his Queen, Marie de Médicis, Regent over the land ; and she begged that she, never having been crowned, should be crowned before he went. Henri stayed his plans to gratify her, in an evil moment for France and for himself, as some strange premonition of impending disaster seemed to have half-revealed to him ; for, from the moment that he hesitated, he was seized with a sombre presentiment that he would never leave Paris alive. The day after the coronation, going to pay a visit to his great minister Sully, who lay ill, Henri, before departing to take command of the army, seated in his coach, escorted by his

gentlemen on horse, was stopped in a narrow road, and the fanatic Ravaillac, leaping on to the wheel of the carriage, stabbed the king to death. The terrible and slow death of Ravaillac, at the hands of the infuriated people, made poor amends for the disastrous blow the wretched man's knife had dealt to France in the murder of this great sovereign, whose generous, active, and noble qualities had raised France to power, and cast into shadow his personal follies and vices.

WHEREIN HENRI OF NAVARRE FAILS TO BRING GENIUS TO FONTAINEBLEAU

1600

CHAPTER VII

WHEREIN FRANCE, TAUGHT BY ITALIAN MASTERS, PROCEEDS TO MAKE ITALIAN MUSIC

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

If we glance at the French endeavour at the death of Henri IV in 1610, historical painting from Rosso to Dubois had been an alien thing; portraiture from Janet to Pierre Dumoustier had begun in the Flemish vision and ended with marked tendencies to create a French School. Yet at the death of Henri IV, for close on twenty years it looked as if art in France must be barren. There was no single historical painter capable of carrying out the demands of the Court of a country growing every day more prosperous. In 1620, when Marie de Medici wished to decorate the palace of the Luxembourg, we shall see that she has to call Rubens from Flanders. The art of Rubens was therefore to exercise a stupendous effect on France; and the Flemish genius, with Italian grace added thereto, was to set the standard of the French achievement.

Then there arose in 1627 a man who was to turn French painting from the Flemish to the Italian vogue, at the very moment that death seemed to have fallen upon what poor Italianesque endeavour there had been, and was to start it upon its way towards its new achievement. His name VOUET. And at the same time, alongside of Vouet, came BLANCHARD, LAURENT DE LAHYRE, PERRIER, and BOURDON. And the great galleries were now to be painted by Frenchmen. There arose alongside of this Italianised French endeavour the poetic genius of POUSSIN and CLAUDE. It were as though they were preparing the way for the grandiose destiny of Louis XIV to be born in a blaze of decorative splendour in art. French art came to life, with Italy for schoolmaster. Rubens was called to paint the decorations of the Luxembourg because there were no Frenchmen to do it. Before he died there were Frenchmen who

WHEREIN FRANCE, TAUGHT BY ITALIAN MASTERS, PROCEEDS TO MAKE ITALIAN MUSIC

could finish the decorations of the Luxembourg. VOUET was twenty when Henri IV died; he learnt his art outside France. He brought a completely new style from his Italian training, with which Fontainebleau had nothing to do. When Louis XIII came to the throne the School of Fontainebleau was dead—its artists dead; such as lived on were wholly out of the vogue.

It was the same with the portrait-painters of the sixteen-hundreds. The vision of the Clouets, of the Dumoustiers, of the Quesnels was gone. The portrait-painters were still called from other lands; but Pourbus was wholly unlike these men. From Flanders came Ferdinand Elle of Mechlin; from Holland came Vrains. With these three artists came the new fashion in France of painting assemblies of aldermen. Two French portrait-painters followed in their steps—LOUIS BEAUBRUN of Amboise, and GEORGES LALLEMAND of Nancy. Lallemand's first group of aldermen was painted in 1611. From 1616 Beaubrun bore the title of painter to the town. This Flemish influence created the fine Flemish artist PHILIPPE DE CHAMPAIGNE, whose groups of aldermen and magistrates are famous in this reign of Louis XIII. But all these French portrait-painters, except the LENAINS, were mediocre enough. During the minority of Louis XIV they were as mediocre, except CLAUDE LEFEVRE. It was the great engraver NANTEUIL who was to reach to genius in portrait-painting in these years of the sixteen-hundreds. It was in Louis XIV's day that the French portrait of a very different type, in the grand manner, was to come to splendour in the art of RIGAUD and LARGILLIÈRE.

It was the ground prepared by the Clouets that bore fruit in NANTEUIL and the great French engravers; so the ground turned up by Primaticcio bore fruit in Lebrun. But other influences were at work; and whilst Rubens affected the French development, so also Correggio through Lemoyne later affected it, and Van Dyck through Largillière and Watteau, though Watteau's art, its deeper art, was national, northern French, purer French than most, since the French genius is more akin to the Flemish than to the Italian.

A HISTORY

LOUIS XIII, 1610-1643

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

The little King Louis XIII being but eight at the death of Henry of Navarre, slain by Ravaillac, the weak Queen-mother, Marie de Médicis, became Regent, and was soon ruled by favourites, particularly by the Florentine adventurer Concini, whom she created Marquis d'Ancre, and by his sister. The policy of Henry of Navarre was at once reversed—the great minister Sully promptly retired from the helm of the State. At twelve the king was declared a man; at the meeting of the States-General at which the boy-king assumed governance, being one Armand Duplessis de Richelieu, Bishop of Luçon. The futile bickerings of the deputies caused their dissolution in 1615—they were not to be called together again until 1789, close on a couple of hundred years thereafter, when they met to create the French Revolution. The king's marriage with Anne of Austria, under the Médicis influence, roused the people to rebellion under the Prince Condé—and the name of Condé became thenceforth a name with which to conjure in France. Condé seemed to have everything within his grasp when there stepped forth one who was to save the Queen-mother's party—Richelieu. However, Louis at sixteen, urged to it by his favourite, the young De Luynes, seized power, and was soon involved in the infamous assassination of his mother's favourite, the Marquis d'Ancre, by De Luynes' party in the courtyard of the Louvre, where one De Vitry, captain of the guard, called upon d'Ancre to surrender his sword; d'Ancre drew instead, and was forthwith shot by the guard—Louis appearing at the window and thanking the assassins. We shall see De Vitry a little later a patron of artists. The Queen-mother was at once banished, and Richelieu sent back to his bishopric. The ambition and greed of De Luynes being greater than his gifts of statesmanship, the great nobles soon gathered round the Queen-mother in discontent; when De Luynes, realising his own incapacity, persuaded Louis to make terms with Marie de Médicis—Richelieu being entrusted with the negotiations, and

WHEREIN FRANCE, TAUGHT BY ITALIAN MASTERS, PROCEEDS TO MAKE ITALIAN MUSIC

thenceforth marked for power. A general amnesty followed, which opened the prison doors to Condé, who had been flung into the Bastille.

Thenceforth Richelieu (1585-1642) steadily advanced to power. The betrayal of the Huguenots by the king, the failure in war and the death of De Luynes, saw the Condé at rivalry with the Queen-mother and her minister Richelieu for control of the king's will. Richelieu procured the cardinal's hat in 1622. By 1624 the distracting councils of the king were at an end—Richelieu had to be summoned to power. Richelieu set himself the task of destroying the Huguenots, of reducing the factious power of the nobles, and of strengthening the Crown. France had found her master at last.

Richelieu took up Henri of Navarre's policy of enmity to Austria, entering into alliance with the Northern Protestant powers to do so, and arranging the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Henrietta Maria, sister to Louis XIII, in 1625. At once France began to win her wars. The Pope, who had rashly interfered with Richelieu on behalf of Austria, got a sharp rebuke from the Cardinal; and Richelieu struck at the rebel Huguenots and at the grand nobles. He bought the base Gaston of Anjou, brother and heir to Louis XIII, with the gift of the Duchy of Orleans, to betray the noble conspirators who had planned Richelieu's assassination. In person, Richelieu took the field against the Huguenots, proved himself a born soldier, defeated Buckingham and the English again and again before La Rochelle, and captured the Huguenot stronghold. He was equally successful against the great French nobles. He sullied his career in 1632 with the judicial murder of the great and chivalrous Marshal Duke of Montmorency; but he taught France that he was master.

Richelieu was hard put to it to keep the reins of power in his crafty fingers, assailed now by the weaknesses of the king, by the bitter enmity of Anne of Austria, the queen, by the hatred of the Queen-mother, Marie de Médicis, who was become hostile to him, and by the nobles of France.

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

Meanwhile, affairs in France moved apace. Turenne came to the front as a great commander in 1640, under the famous Count Harcourt, of the ducal house of Lorraine. Richelieu's lucky star aided his craft and skill—the Count de Soissons gained a victory over the royal troops at Sedan, only to be killed by a pistol-shot at the close of the day as he was giving orders for the pursuit of the broken Royalists. The dangerous intrigues of the Marquis of Cinq-Mars were only countered by desperate efforts on the part of the Cardinal, now in failing health—and by desperate means. Just as he had brought France to a leading position in Europe, had brought utter humiliation to the House of Austria—his political enemies defeated on every side—Richelieu returned to Paris to die on the 4th of the December of 1642, with the sublime confession, in answer to his confessor as to whether he forgave his enemies, that he had never had any except those of the State. Six months afterwards, the king, Louis XIII, followed his great minister to the grave. The child Louis XIV ascended the throne of France.

Richelieu had founded the French Academy of Letters in 1635; Mazarin was soon to enlarge the Academy by adding painting, sculpture, and architecture.

With Louis XIII came into France a marked effort to utter a national art in painting. The Flemish portrait-painters who now came to France brought Flemish intention. Instead of being dependent on the Court, they took to painting citizens and groups of citizens. Art became divorced from the Court, and entered into the home. Instead of being in the king's household on a yearly stipend, the painters became independent. Immediately the national spirit began to assert itself.

The fashion all over Europe was turning men's eyes to Italy, and the schools of the Caracci and the like were the training-schools of the new endeavour. But there was also the Flemish invasion from the north; and the Flemish home-life was setting a fashion amongst the well-to-do in France. This

northern invasion was, of course, most strongly felt in the north. And the town of Laon now gave France a family of painters who were to exercise an influence which we are prone to underrate, as pedantry is prone to underrate the whole artistic significance and national utterance of this whole century.

WHEREIN FRANCE, TAUGHT BY ITALIAN MASTERS, PROCEEDS TO MAKE ITALIAN MUSIC

THE BROTHERS LE NAIN

The work of the three brothers Le Nain is not easy to separate. Born at Laon, they came to Paris. The eldest, ANTOINE LE NAIN, called "the Chevalier," born about 1588, died in Paris in 1648. LOUIS LE NAIN, called "the Roman," born in 1593, died in Paris in 1648, the same year as his elder brother. The third brother, MATHEW LE NAIN, born in 1600, died in Paris in 1677, surviving his two elder brothers by some thirty years. All three brothers came to wide repute, and were to be foundation members of the Royal Academy of France when it was founded by Mazarin under Louis XIV in 1648.

The Louvre is rich in their fine works, in which they are seen painting scenes from the life of the peasant in a manner closely akin to the Dutch style, and the style of Flemish Teniers. They went to Nature with searching northern eyes; and they painted with a forceful directness of handling and a grip of character that ought to bring them back to the high position which they deserve amongst the founders of the real French School.

In face of the very marked difference of the colour-sense displayed in their works, some being clear and translucent, with a remarkable feeling for values and fittingness of style; others having a trend to hotness and dry handling, with straggling arrangement, it is probable that the works of the greater brother will soon be separated from those of the others. All of them were interested in the life of the common folk of the day; and they stand out as fine realists at a time that was chiefly concerned with alien things and an alien vision. They are to the sixteen-hundreds what Chardin was to be to the seventeen-hundreds.

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

The French historical painting was now to go boldly to Italy. When 1600 struck Rome was become the Mecca of the art-student everywhere. The academies formed by the Caracci at Bologna were the talk of every studio. The schools at Rome followed. Every student who could get to Rome went to Rome, and as each clever fellow set foot in Rome the emptiness of death fell upon his native art—except only a few Flemings and French. The Flemings here and there won through, keeping their native tongue. The Frenchmen—there being no French painting to corrupt—were not corrupted; but they lost much of their exquisite French speech in an Italian accent. This Italian schooling was to lie heavy upon the French genius, which struggled through the sixteen-hundreds heavily handicapped, until, at the dawn of the seventeen-hundreds, Watteau was to mitigate the evil by drawing France back to its innate kinship with Flanders and the north; but it required the Revolution to give back France to her true and virile self, and not until the eighteen-hundreds did the School of Barbizon utter the pure French truth and discover the French reality.

This Italian art that spilled over the Alps into France had a strange result in France, wholly different from its effect on Spain. Whilst the Dutchmen and Spaniards of the first rank were thrilled by the virile revelation of the Tenebrosi, the Frenchmen rather took interest in the mannered grace of the Eclectics. Fortunately, whilst it only filled France with gods wholly alien to her genius, France was too young and inquisitive and athrill with life to become merely imitative; and the French utterance would out. But the Italian obsession was enough to turn the French art into an artificial thing for long enough.

Italianism created JEAN DE BOULOUGNE, called LE VALENTIN (1591-1634), and

SIMON VOUET
1590 – 1649

Born in Paris in 1590, Simon Vouet died six years after his

king, Louis XIII; he represents the historic art of the reign. Pupil to his father, Laurence Vouet, he went at an early age to England; thence to Constantinople; thence in 1612 to Italy, working for thirteen years in Venice, Genoa, and Rome. He became an Italian Mannerist, and his art is empty enough. In 1627 he was in France, and became painter to the king; and until 1640 his position at Court was supreme. In that year Nicolas Poussin came to Paris from Rome, caught the king's favour, was made painter to the Court, and drew the king's favour away from Vouet, who, with his friends, intrigued hotly against the new favourite, harassing him in every way. When the king decided to decorate the Louvre, and appointed Poussin to the task, the feeling was very strong. Poussin, fretted by the bitterness of the attack upon him, asked leave to return to Rome two years thereafter, on pretence of bringing back his wife to France, and the following year the king died (1643). Poussin considered his promise to return to France cancelled thereby. Vouet died in 1649. Although no great artist, Vouet trained two men who were to have a large influence in the reign of Louis XIV—Le Brun and Lesueur.

WHEREIN FRANCE, TAUGHT BY ITALIAN MASTERS, PROCEEDS TO MAKE ITALIAN MUSIC

VALENTIN (Jean de Boulougne) lived and worked chiefly in Rome, and there died in 1634.

NICOLAS POUSSIN

1594 – 1665

Into the art of France came about the same years as the brothers Le Nain another man of genius from the north. NICOLAS POUSSIN, born at the village of Villiers, hard by Les Andelys in Normandy, in the June of 1594, came of noble stock from Soissons, not far from the Le Nains' town of Laon. 'Prenticed to the mediocre QUINTIN VARIN, a painter of Les Andelys, Nicolas Poussin at eighteen decided to seek fortune in Paris. Going to Paris in 1612, Louis XIII being then a couple of years on the throne, the young fellow became at once enamoured of the antique, and doggedly set himself to copy such as he could, whether originals or casts; and he naturally was drawn to the men of the School of Fontainebleau and such

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

Italian paintings as breathed the antique spirit. By consequence Rome called him urgently; and after long hardship and bitter struggle he at last stepped into the city of his dreams in his thirtieth year (1624), where he met a kindred soul in the sculptor Quesnoy; both eagerly flung themselves into their art, in a state of exaltation. Poussin modelled as well as painted; he joined the school of Domenichino, for whom he had a life-long worship. Domenichino was at the height of his career and repute and vogue, and Poussin underwent a severe discipline to drawing and design under him. The academic training of the Bologna schoolmen was very severe. What there was to learn of technique was brilliantly taught; and if the teaching produced only too many miles of empty painting, at least the painting was well done. For Poussin at any rate it created a fine basic grounding in his craftsmanship. He must have lived on enthusiasm; for his means could have been but of the poorest.

The first powerful friend who seems to have come into his life was the Cardinal Barberini, to whom the poet Marino introduced the Frenchman on the eve of the Cardinal's diplomatic visit to France and Spain. Barberini, on coming back to Rome, commissioned Poussin to paint *The Death of Germanicus* and *The Capture of Jerusalem*, and took a deep interest in his welfare. Poussin at once leaped into fame, and the demand for works by him poured in. His fame grew with every new achievement. He was soon a master of repute in Rome. He was married and in the vogue when, in 1640, his forty-sixth year, his heart began to hunger for his native land; and one of his chief patrons, M. de Chantelou, being about to return to Paris, where he lived, and anxious to have Poussin settled near him, the artist journeyed home to the French capital with him. Poussin arrived in Paris to find himself famous, and warmly received by Cardinal Richelieu, who presented him to the king, Louis XIII, who seems to have been greatly impressed by him and made him forthwith his painter in ordinary, giving him apartments at the Tuileries.

II

NICOLAS POUSSIN

1594 – 1665

"THE SHEPHERDS IN ARCADIA"

(Les Bergers d'Arcadie)

(LOUVRE)

The inscription on the tomb is "*Et in Arcadia Ego.*"

Painted in oil on canvas. 2 ft. 9½ in. × 3 ft. 11½ in. (0·85 × 1·21).

WHEREIN FRANCE, TAUGHT BY ITALIAN MASTERS, PROCEEDS TO MAKE ITALIAN MUSIC

The new life fretted the man, unused to the restraint and etiquette of a Court, and he had now lived his independent life so long at Rome that he became home-sick. Two years thereafter, in 1642, he made the excuse of going to Rome to bring back his wife; and the king dying in the following year (1643), Poussin looked upon his promise to return as cancelled thereby, and never again left Rome, where he died on the 19th of November 1665, in his seventy-second year, being buried in the church of St. Laurence in Lucina.

Passing his whole artistic life in Italy, drawn only by Italian ideals, Poussin has been called "one of the greatest masters of painting that France has ever produced." Yet, Italian as was his vision, and Italian the atmosphere of his art, there is in it something of that innate French taste that even his Italian career could not wholly obliterate. If scholarship had anything to do with art, he is very great; but it has not. Indeed, his chief triumph lies in that, in spite of his classical ideals, his instinct kept him an artist, and he remained original amongst the Italians when they themselves were becoming mere Mannerists. His sense of arrangement has a rare dignity, and an original style. His great *Bacchanale* at the Louvre, and the fine movement and bacchanalian spirit of orgie in the National Gallery *Bacchanal*, show him a man of genius; whilst his broad and sweeping brush and his compelling artistry rid his work of that emptiness which was death to so many painters of his age. It is whimsical to read criticism praising the National Gallery *Bacchanal*, because, being "a scene of debauchery there is no vulgarity, no undue coarseness!" which, had it been so, would have set Poussin amongst the mediocrities and the liars. We see what we go forth to see. Poussin was concerned with the bacchanalian frenzy, and he uttered the mood of it in wild dance, a swinging sense of unrestrained revelry, and its more than hint of bestial intoxication, in a masterpiece that is above apology. Here, and in a fine series of his works at the Louvre, may be seen the spacious and dignified art of the man who largely created the French school of historical and subject

THE RISE OF FRENCH PAINTING

painting, and whose genius will one day be recognised in its fulness. To him the debt of Simon Vouet, of Bourdon, and of Le Brun was heavy; and his noble design was to guide the French achievement after them. He unfortunately dragged alien gods across the Alps and set them loose on his native land; he too often marred the beauty of women by making foul satyrs their companions; but beautiful women he set in majestic landscapes with a high skill of artistry such as no French painter before him had ever approached. And he did a great service to the innate French genius for landscape by giving landscape a dignified and important place in his art, and thereby firing the French genius.

Dresden possesses his fine *Venus Reposing*; Berlin his great river landscape, by which his best art should be judged. Poussin could also reach the commonplace with ease.

SEBASTIAN BOURDON
1616 – 1671

SEBASTIAN BOURDON, born at Montpellier in 1616, came to Paris in tender years, and went as pupil to BARTHÉLEMY, from whom he went to the cities of Bordeaux and Toulouse, where he was soon in considerable repute. But Rome was now the Mecca of the young artists; and to Rome he went, living thereat some eight years.

Bourdon was soon a far more able painter than Vouet, and Vouet's position at the French Court probably now drew him back to Paris to try his fortune in his own land. He was soon in the vogue; in 1648 he became painter to the king, Louis XIV, and became so prosperous that he married Susanna de Guernier, widow of Nicolas Colsonnet, who became the mother of nine children to him; she dying in 1658, Bourdon married six months thereafter Margaret Jumeau, who added seven children to his already large family. These hostages to fortune drove the artist to prodigious artistic endeavour to provide for his family; and he wrought a large amount of work which he kept at a surprisingly high standard of achievement

WHEREIN FRANCE, TAUGHT BY ITALIAN MASTERS, PROCEEDS TO MAKE ITALIAN MUSIC

Bourdon was one of the twelve foundation members of the Royal Academy. Upon the outbreak of civil war and religious strife, Bourdon, being a Protestant, fled to Stockholm, where, being welcomed, he settled awhile, and there painted his portrait of *Queen Christina*, well known from its fine engraving by Nanteuil. In 1655, affairs being settled down again in France, Bourdon came back to Paris, was made Rector of the Academy, and knew good fortune and wide employment up to his death in 1671.

Bourdon will one day come into his own again. One of the best painters of his day, his small pictures of the life of the peasant set him beside the best of the brothers Le Nain.

LE SUEUR
1617 – 1655

Son of a wood-carver, and born in Paris, one of the men who played a considerable part in the art of these days was EUSTACE LE SUEUR, one of the pupils of Vouet, whose prolific but somewhat empty historical subjects brought him into a wide vogue. He was one of the foundation members of the Academy, but he only lived until 1655. Steeped in the classical Italian ideals, he never grew to great personal utterance. And the Frenchman in him is difficult to discover under his strong Italian accent.

THE GRAND MANNER

CHAPTER VIII

WHEREIN THE ART OF FRANCE BURSTS INTO SONG

CLAUDE LORRAIN
1600 – 1682

WHEREIN THE ART OF FRANCE BURSTS INTO SONG

With the year 1600 there came into France one of the first of the mighty painters of that exquisitely sensing people—Claude Gellée, to become immortal as Claude Lorrain. Claude was to raise the French achievement to the heights; with him comes a new vision into the world, that is to be the forerunner of a new art to mankind. He came to genius and personal utterance in an atmosphere that was stifling art everywhere else; and of the strange paradox nothing is more strange than that he should have boldly left his homeland and wrought his life-work in that very land of Italy that was death to alien endeavour. But, be it remembered, France as we understand the word to-day was not the France of Claude's day. The territory of Lorraine was added to the kingdom of France by Louis XIII after Claude was born; and a Lorrainer was nearer akin to the Flemish, and in closer touch with Italy than he was with France, though he spoke French. Yet he was a Frenchman without doubt, in the sense that a Welshman is British; though when he went to Rome, it was with the Flemish and Dutch that he associated, not with the French.

Rome was now the centre of fashion in Europe. The old aristocracy, threatened by the new aristocracy that each new Pope raised up about him from amongst his kin, was eagerly marrying amongst the newly enriched. The old ideals of greatness remained; and a palace and fine pictures were part of that ideal. But the newly rich did not want to wait—they employed the artists who could cover a wall most rapidly. The artists swarmed to Rome. They were about as choice a pack of scoundrels and knaves as even Rome held. There is a well-

THE GRAND MANNER

known story of Tassi, whom the Pope, Paul v, so greatly favoured. The Pope complained that all artists were a contemptible pack; he had been tricked and deceived by all save Tassi — and seeing the bewildered surprise of those to whom he spoke, he added that Tassi at least had never deceived him; he had always realised that he was an unmistakable rogue.

To humble folk, Jean Gellée and his wife Anne Padose, was born in 1600 their third son, CLAUDE GELLÉE, at the village of Chamagne in the Vosges, in the Duchy of Lorraine—hence his name of *le Lorrain*. From the house in which he was born stretch green pasture-lands to the Moselle. Claude was the third of five sons. Born poor, the small Claude had to start upon the struggle for bread in boyhood, and knew laborious days to win scanty wage.

Claude was a dull lad, and school yielded him little knowledge—indeed, his scraps of writing on the backs of his drawings in later years prove him a poor scholar—his spelling was dreadful to the day he signed his last will and testament. So they put him 'prentice to a pastrycook. Now it so chanced that Lorraine was famous for its cooks, and to Rome they went in batches; and the youth Claude, both his parents having died when the lad was twelve, and Claude having picked up some drawing from his eldest brother Jean, a wood-engraver and carver, was seized with the desire to go to Rome, and went about 1613 with his fellow-cooks to the city that was to mean so much to him. In Rome the youth found a lodging near the Pantheon, and seems to have lived on the scantiest means. He next appears at about eighteen or nineteen as 'prentice to the "rogue" Agostino Tassi who could not deceive the Pope; in return for being initiated into the mysteries of art he acted as stable-boy, colour-grinder, and general slave—'tis said that he even went as cook on condition of being taught painting. With Tassi, at anyrate, he was in 1619.

Now the "rogue" Tassi, born at Perugia in 1566 (his real name Agostino Buonamici), had been a pupil at Rome to Paul Bril, a Dutch painter who had been one of the first artists to

WHEREIN THE ART OF FRANCE BURSTS INTO SONG

paint pure landscape; and the vain, hot-headed, swashbuckling scamp Tassi, who had amongst other little adventures "done time" to the tune of ten weary years in the galleys at Leghorn for getting into an ugly street riot in Florence, had thereafter come to the Pope's favour in Rome through his sea-pieces—storms being his chief source of fame. In spite of the gout, he was a good-natured "rogue," and took kindly to his famished pupil. On the break-up of Tassi's studio at the death of his powerful patron the Pope, Claude seems to have come under the influence of Elsheimer's pupil Wals—Elsheimer himself was dead, dying in a debtor's prison.

Claude left Rome in the April of 1625, and got wandering for two years, staying awhile at Venice, thence on through Bavaria, to his native village in Lorraine. The seaport of Venice with its great shipping left an impression on the young fellow that the years could never blot out.

From Chamagne Claude betook himself to Nancy, the capital of Lorraine, where the Ducal Court was famous for its luxury and patronage of the arts; and at Nancy a kinsman introduced him to CLAUDE DERUET, the painter to the duke. Deruet had taught Louis XIII painting, and had been made a noble by the king. This portrait-painter and designer of decorations treated Claude kindly, but set him to work with other assistants upon the architectural ornaments of a newly built church of the Carmelites, to Claude's great disappointment and irk. However, a man slipped and fell from the scaffolding, and by good luck was caught upon a projecting beam from which Claude rescued him—but the young fellow promptly made the shock an excuse for refusing to go on a scaffolding again. He was, of a truth, hungering for Italy; and he turned southwards and made for Marseilles, where, falling ill of a fever, he was robbed of all he possessed. Making enough with a couple of pictures to pay his way across, he took ship to Civita Vecchia, made friends on board with CHARLES ERRARD of Nantes, Court-painter to Louis XIII, and set foot in Rome again, after an exile of two years, upon St. Luke's Day, 1627.

THE GRAND MANNER

Claude now made the acquaintance of the German artist Sandrart, who was to become his biographer; and the two men were soon fast friends. The next few years were hard years of study from Nature for Claude; and he toiled at his art with dogged will. His means at this time were very narrow. But he was keenly intent on "penetrating the inmost secrets of Nature"—getting up before the dawn, and off to the Campagna, he would stay out until the night fell, keenly watching every mood of the dawn, recording the tints of the sunrise and sunset, and of the twilight, then home to his garret worn out with fatigue, rising at the day's light to set his palette and paint the impression.

Claude had come upon Sandrart near the falls of Tivoli, Sandrart painting from Nature—he lays emphasis on this painting from Nature, it was clearly an unusual thing to do—and Claude took to the idea. Thereafter the two friends would walk together, "making studies of mountains, caves, valleys, the terrible falls, the temple of the Sibyl," Claude always preferring scenes with a wide horizon.

But bread had to be made; and Claude, mounting the scaffold again, wrought some frescoes in the palace of Cardinal Crescenzio, in the palace of the Muti family, and in their mansion on the Trinita de' Monti—a *Palace and a Forest*, a *Plain with Mountains and Waterfalls*, a *Seaport with Ships*, *Ruins*, and the like.

All the while—as he did to the end of his days—Claude was trying to master the painting of the figure by drawing from the life or from statues at the Academy, though he never rid his hand of heaviness in the business; a weakness that he realised all too well in his jest, "I sell the landscape, but I give the figures." When he employed other artists to paint the figures in his landscapes, he always insisted on sketching their movements, forms, and positions himself—whether it were Allegrini or Lauri, Jan Miels or Jacques Courtois, called "il Borgonone," or his brother the battle-painter Guillaume Courtois, but this luxury was only to be in his later years,

when he was come to fame. Claude was etching all this while.

WHEREIN THE ART OF FRANCE BURSTS INTO SONG

So the kindly, generous, sincere man, living wholly in his art, avoiding the tavern brawls and merry-makings of the artists that figure so often in the police records of the day, and with Sandrart as his sole intimate friend, working hard, and hard put to it to earn his daily bread, knew nothing of the society of Rome. The leading French artist at Rome was Nicolas Poussin, but the illiterate simple rustic Claude lived in a world far apart from the aristocratic and scholarly Poussin, a philosopher and a pedant. Yet we know from Sandrart that they occasionally met—they and Sandrart and Du Quesnoy—to discuss art, and even to sketch at Tivoli.

When Fame came, she sought Claude, rather than Claude Fame. But she came in no hurry and without violence.

About 1629 he painted the two little canvases, *Campo Vaccino* and the *Seaport with Crockery Dealer*, both at the Louvre.

In 1634 Bourdon came to Rome—he was a deft imitator of any style that interested him—and seeing a landscape in Claude's studio, he went home and in eight days produced so astounding a mimicry of it that it became the talk of the studios. Claude, moved by curiosity, went to see it, and became so angry that he would have taken vengeance on his fellow-countryman, had not Bourdon astutely kept out of the way. In 1634, therefore, Claude was come to considerable repute. And about this time he sent for his nephew Jean Gellée to take charge of his household and his business affairs, that his whole time might be given to his art.

Philippe de Béthune, Comte de Selles et de Charost, was made Ambassador to the Pope for the second time by the French in 1627; this younger brother of the great minister Sully became one of Claude's earliest patrons—for him he painted two works at the Louvre, the golden *Seaport in the Setting Sun* and the *Forum*, of which last there is a copy at Dulwich—he etched it in 1636. He was soon working also for the Cardinal Guido Bentivoglio, he whose portrait in the Pitti Van Dyck painted;

THE GRAND MANNER

and the three landscapes that Claude wrought for him brought him to wide fame. The Pope, who had such a mania for fortifications, ordered four pictures from his hand—two are in the Louvre, the *Ancient Port of Messina* (or *The Combatants*), 1639, in which is seen the Villa Medici, which was now the French Academy at Rome, in the light of the setting sun; and the pastoral called *The Village Dance* (1639). The cardinals rushed at the new fashion; Claude was overwhelmed with orders, amongst others from Cardinal Rospigliosi, afterwards Pope Clement IX. For Cardinal Giorio he painted three landscapes, three seaports, and a figure subject, of which a *Seaport at Sunset* (1644) is in the National Gallery, whilst two are in the Louvre, the *Samuel anointing David King of Israel* (1647) and the stately *Landing of Cleopatra at Tarsus*. Orders came pouring in from other lands. In 1644 he painted for England the exquisite little work, the landscape in the National Gallery of *Echo and Narcissus*; whilst he was very busy with demands from Paris. Grenoble has a fine landscape; Windsor another—both views of *Tivoli*. Lord Methuen has the little gem, landscape with St. John and two angels, painted on copper.

The death of Cardinal Bentivoglio and of the Pope, Urban VIII, in 1644, and the election of Innocent X, the enemy of the Barberini, though it saw the late Pope's kin despoiled of their palaces and their wealth, fortunately had no evil consequences for Claude. He found in the new Pope's nephew, Prince Camillo Pamfili, an enthusiastic patron. Pamfili, son of the notorious Donna Olympia Maidalchina, though made a cardinal by his uncle, had flung aside the office to marry the richest heiress in Rome, the beautiful Olympia Aldobrandina, and gave himself up to pleasure and art. Claude painted four pictures for him, three are still at the Doria in Rome—the *Mercury stealing the Cattle of Admetus*, the *Mill*, and the *Temple of Apollo at Delos*; the fourth, the *Ford*, is at Pesth. The Duc de Bouillon, now resident at Rome, also became a patron of Claude. Bouillon, the elder brother of the great Turenne, Huguenot by blood and tradition, had inherited the turbulent

III

CLAUDE LORRAIN

1600 – 1682

"A SEAPORT"

(Vue d'un Port de Mer : Effet de Brume)

(LOUVRE)

Painted in oil on canvas. Signed on a stone in the left foreground: "CLAUDE IN ROMA, 1646." 3 ft. 10¾ in. × 4 ft. 11 in. (1·19 × 1·50).

habits and passion for intrigue as well as the soldierly gifts of his father; a bitter enemy to Richelieu, and involved in the conspiracy of Cinq Mars, he had been arrested and flung into prison, from which he was freed by his astute and gifted wife, who promptly seized Sedan and threatened to hand the city to Spain if the duke were not set free. Bouillon went to Rome, and calmly flung over his faith for that of Rome, and was made commander-in-chief by the Pope. For him Claude painted the superb variant of the *Mill*, called the *Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca*, and the seaport called *The Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba*, both dated 1648, and soon known to fame as the "Bouillon Claudes"; to become the celebrated possession, after the French Revolution, of the National Gallery.

WHEREIN THE ART OF FRANCE BURSTS INTO SONG

Another great patron who came into Claude's life in this year of 1648 was the Duc de Liancourt, husband of the gifted and virtuous Jeanne de Schomberg. It was Liancourt whose passion for pictures was so great that, his wife lying at death's door, he vowed to make any sacrifice, even to sell his pictures and give the money to the poor, if she recovered. The Louvre has *The Ford* and *Ulysses restoring Chryseis to her Father*, which Claude painted for him.

At forty-eight, then, Claude was widely famous. The next year was to witness an honour paid to him which must have thrilled him. Velazquez was in Spain in 1649, on the service of Philip IV of Spain, buying pictures for his royal master; he was in Rome in 1650, painting his famous *Innocent X*, and Claude was asked to paint eight works for Madrid. These four subjects from the Old Testament and four subjects from the New are at the Prado, though the Spanish climate has not dealt kindly with them, but those that have escaped reveal the high genius of Claude. There are, besides, two Claudes painted for Philip V. Four of the eight are uprights—the *View of the Forum with the Burial of Santa Sabina*; the landscape called *The Finding of Moses*; the landscape called *Tobit and the Angel*, and a *Seaport with the Embarkation of St. Paula*, of which last three Claude painted replicas now belonging to the Duke

THE GRAND MANNER

of Wellington, Lord Portarlington, and the Dulwich Gallery. The four horizontal paintings were the landscape called *The Ford*; the moonlit landscape with *St. Anthony* tempted amongst ruins; the *Hermit in the Desert*; and the wooded landscape with waterfalls, called the *Kneeling Magdalene before a Cross.*

Claude was so troubled and vexed by forgeries of his works that he made an album of sketches of all works produced by him, famous as the *Liber Veritatis.*

Claude now won the admiration of that strange art-loving creature the Comte de Brienne; this Henri Louis de Loménie was Secretary of State to Louis XIII, and for him Claude painted the two little ovals at the Louvre of the *Siege of Rochelle* (1651) and the *Forcing the Pass of Susa*—the figures said to be by Jacques Courtois; both are on copper, plated with silver.

For Signor Cardello he painted the large Grosvenor House *Worship of the Golden Calf.*

Innocent X died in 1655, and Cardinal Chigi, who had been famous for his upright character and attacks upon the corruption of the Vatican, became Pope as Alexander VII. But the Jesuits persuaded him of the unwisdom of attacking abuses; and the Pope, giving up the ugly business in disgust, devoted himself to the arts. For him Claude painted the *Rape of Europa* and the *Battle of the Bridge*, both in the Issoupoff Collection in Russia. Claude was fond of the Rape of Europa, painting it thrice; he had etched it in 1634, and the British Museum has a finished sketch of 1670. For his nephew Don Camillo the Pope built a splendid palace in the Piazza Colonna, for which Claude painted in 1658 the National Gallery *David in the Cave of Adullam* (or *Sinon brought before Priam*), one of his grand compositions.

The year 1656 brought the plague to Rome, and its ravages were terrible. But Claude and Poussin stayed on, calmly working. Of the three pictures of this year was Claude's silvery *Jacob bargaining for Rachel*, now treasured at Petworth. He was pouring forth works, as his *Liber Veritatis* bears witness. A man of regular habits, he recorded all his works. If a slow,

he was an untiring worker, and was painting his five pictures a year. Of these the most famous are the Bridgwater *Apuleian Shepherd* (1657); the Dresden *Acis and Galatea*; the superb *Flight into Egypt* at the Hermitage, one of the greatest landscapes of the age; and the Grosvenor House *Decline of the Roman Empire*, painted for Le Brun, then the head of the French Academy at Rome. Unfortunately the landscape called *Esther*, which Claude considered his masterpiece, has vanished.

WHEREIN THE ART OF FRANCE BURSTS INTO SONG

So fame and wealth came to Claude Lorrain. But he was henceforth to know ill-health—the gout came to him as though envious of his splendour, in his fortieth year; and increased with the increase of his fame. It struck hard at Claude, since it made an end of his walks abroad, that meant so much to him and his art. He clung to the *Flight into Egypt* and the *Journey to Emmaus* to the end; he had "painted them on the spot," so his will puts it—"landscape painted from Nature."

He made his first will in the February of 1663, being threatened with death, but death mercifully passed him by. That will is interesting as lifting the corner of the veil from the secret romance of his life. The simple, pious, kindly soul makes provision for a little girl Agnes, of eleven years, living in his house, to whom he leaves property, furniture, his precious *Flight into Egypt*, and the *Liber Veritatis*. His portrait and the copy of it have vanished; we have to rely on Sandrart's mediocre woodcut affair alone. By the May of 1663 Claude was himself again, and was painting the Devonshire large landscape of *Mercury and Bacchus*. But his hand loses some of its old freedom, crippled with the gout, though now and again the old cunning reveals itself in all its splendour.

For the Constable of Naples, Colonna, husband of Mazarin's niece, the beautiful and witty Maria Mancini—she who roused the passionate love of the young Louis XIV, and whose later escapades made her notorious—Claude painted eight pictures. Most are now in English private collections; the fine *Egeria and her Nymphs* is at Naples; the Wantage Collection holds the exquisite *Enchanted Castle*, which inspired the poem by Keats.

THE GRAND MANNER

For the Archbishop of Toulouse, Monseigneur de Bourlemont, he painted three landscapes and a seapiece—the Bridgwater *Moses and the Burning Bush*; the *Cephalus and Procris* at the Doria Palace in Rome; the *Apollo and the Cumæan Sibyl*, and the Bridgwater *Demosthenes on the Sea-shore*.

For his loyal patron, Cardinal Rospigliosi, he had painted *The Piping Herdsman* and the *Peasants attacked by Brigands*; in the March of 1667 his patron became Pope, and Claude painted for him a subject from his favourite inspirer, Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. Claude was now overwhelmed with demands for his work. The sketch in the *Liber Veritatis* of the *Call of St. Andrew and St. Peter* makes one regret the loss of the painting. The Northbrook *Pastoral* remains. To 1668 belong the two Munich landscapes, the two *Hagars*; in 1667 he had painted the great Munich *The Ford*.

Death threatened Claude again in the June of 1670; and he added a codicil to his will, in which the cancelling of several other codicils proves recurring ill-health in the years between. This last codicil was to create lawsuits that were not settled a century after he died. Again death passed him by. But he could now only work two or three hours a day; and rapidly his skill deserted him. The golden glory gives way to coldness; the sunshine departs out of his sublime art. He was now vexed by swarms of forgeries. The kindly soul, remembering the "rogue" Tassi's kindnesses to his struggling youth, took a poor lame deformity, a boy called Giovanni Domenico, into his house, and trained him. The lad's will was as crooked as his body. Twenty-five years of training made him a skilful imitator of his master. Envious tongues began to whisper that Claude did not paint his own works; and the conceited Domenico, his vanity touched, left his master's roof and claimed reward for his years of service to him. Claude, his gentle nature wounded, paid the scoundrel, who, by poetic justice, died soon thereafter.

Orders poured in, spite of Claude's failing powers. To the year 1673 belongs the Holkam *Perseus and Pegasus*. Of these

last years is the Beaumont *Philip baptizing the Eunuch.* The *Christ's Appearance in the Garden* is of 1681, in which year he painted the *Parnassus and the Muses.* In his last year of 1682 he painted a *Temple of Castor and Pollux*, the drawing for which is in the British Museum.

WHEREIN THE ART OF FRANCE BURSTS INTO SONG

On the 21st of the November of 1682 Claude's hand was stilled by death. He had spent the greater part of his great wealth upon his poorer kin, and died comparatively a poor man. They buried him in the church of Santa Trinita de' Monti.

He left behind him his famous *Liber Veritatis*, a book of two hundred drawings, sketches of his pictures, as witness against forgeries of his works, in which he wrote the particulars of their creation as well. Unfortunately all his works are not therein recorded. It is now at Chatsworth. Earlom, the engraver, reproduced it in mezzotint in 1777, in two volumes, to which a third volume, after a hundred drawings by Claude, was added. Unfortunately Earlom also "touched up" some of the originals. It remains a precious record of his work.

England is rich in her possession of the astounding drawings of Claude Lorrain—the British Museum is rich in such master-work as the *Italian Seaport, with boats*, limpid, atmospheric.

As with painting and drawing, so Claude brought rare distinction to etching. His forty-eight known etchings are all too rare. It was in the famous plate of *The Brigands*, dated 1633, that he achieved his first master-work in this medium; his most famous plate, perhaps, is the stately *Driving the Cattle to the Meadows.*

The art of Claude has been made the cockpit of untold reams of fatuous criticism. From the solemn pronouncements of the gentleman who in elephantine pomposity announced to a bedazzled world that "Claude's view of landscape is false to Nature in that it is entirely anthropocentric," to the gush of such as seek in it for qualities that Claude had no desire to utter, you shall find out the veriest scientific cant that has no shred of artistic sense within it.

Claude came into Italy a Frenchman of imagination, thrilled

THE GRAND MANNER

by the romance of the wonderful land. He stood before the splendour of Italy, his emotions stirred to their uttermost deeps by the fascination, the legend, the dream of it all, bathed in the limpid sunlight. And being granted the power to utter that which he felt, with hand skilled as few hands are skilled, he set down in ecstacy the wonder and the splendour of it all in a large, majestic, and wondrous art that compels into our senses the fragrance, the beauty, the romance and the faëry that rise in our imagination on the contemplation of Italy. Whether it were "anthropocentric" or "nincompoopocephalous" matters no tinkers' trough to us, nor mattered to Claude Lorrain. He was a poet; and he wrought the clumsy and difficult oil-colours to his will, that they should compel the masterpiece so that it should pour into our sense of vision the impression that Italy made upon him. And he wrought these things with a skill of design, a cunning of hand, and a haunting gift of poetry that place him among the supreme artists of all time.

To seek in the art of Claude Lorrain for the modern utterance were to misunderstand the whole significance of art. He was a poet, uttering the spirit of his age. This is not to his discredit, but to his splendour. It was as inevitable that Ruskin, and his like, should not be able to sense his great art, as that they should not be able to sense the art of Whistler. But Velazquez and Turner could understand. And the influence of his genius has been prodigious.

Claude looked upon Italy and uttered the magic of it as no Italian so uttered it. He created an art such as had aforetime never been seen. He went to Nature. And if that Nature happened to be a Nature trimmed and arranged by the will of man, that was none of his doing. He uttered the romance of Italy as Shakespeare in his Italian plays uttered it. He remained through it all a Frenchman; he brought to his art the subtle and French vision. Claude is the first great painter of France. In him France awoke to sublime utterance in the realm of painting, as by a miracle. He saw a world before him out of which the realities had departed, leaving but a

splendid memory; so he arranged with consummate skill his works of art to breathe forth that ordered romance. It was there before him. And with truth he recorded the stately pomp and circumstance that were the very spirit of his age. But there bathed this dead land a living sun; it was held in a living wizardry of light; and Claude uttered that subtle splendour with a skill of hand and cunning of craftsmanship such as are only granted to genius. Think of that *Flight into Egypt*; what grandeur is in its august splendour of design! Out of his revelation was born the astounding landscape art of his great century; it was to set afire the achievement of Corot later; it was to bring to birth the sublime utterance of the greatest poet in the landscape of the ages, English Turner.

WHEREIN THE ART OF FRANCE BURSTS INTO SONG

That little mimics should go to Claude, and gaze through his spectacles instead of looking upon Nature, was inevitable. Every giant creates this danger; the academic is the killer of art.

Turner knew a vaster orchestration, a wider gamut than Claude. But Turner lived in a different age. Turner's art had been as false to Claude's day, as Claude's to Turner's. When Turner bequeathed his *Building of Carthage* and the *Misty Morning* to the National Gallery on condition that they "hang always between the two pictures painted by Claude, *The Seaport* and *The Mill*," he set up his own age against an age that was past and gone; and even as he surpassed in power of utterance the gifts of the dead, he himself fell to the academic falsity of trying to utter dead music.

The superb Dresden *Landscape with Figures*, the great Hermitage *Flight into Egypt*, reach to the majestic heights of human utterance; and the man who created them created landscape that is amongst the immortal achievement of his race.

Dying, Claude handed on the flame to Watteau, whose art is steeped in the wondrous vision that Claude discovered to the world, created by him and wrought with the wizardry of his immortal brush.

THE GRAND MANNER

The landscape of the age of the Grand Manner was scarce likely to produce another Claude Lorrain; but he influenced the two Patels, father and son. PIERRE PATEL THE ELDER (1620 ?-1676) and his son PIERRE ANTOINE PATEL THE YOUNGER (1648-1708), both signed the same name. The Louvre has works by both.

GASPARD DUGHET
called
GASPARD POUSSIN
1613 – 1675

Poussin of the Landscapes

The large sense of landscape that was the dower of Nicolas Poussin, he developed to high fulfilment in his great pupil, his young brother-in-law GASPARD DUGHET, better known as GASPARD POUSSIN, though the name is unfortunate, creating much confusion in the two masters.

GASPARD DUGHET, though of French blood, was born in Rome in 1613; and was a mere child when Nicolas Poussin arived in that city. Poussin later married his sister. Dughet became pupil to him, to his great advantage; Poussin took a deep interest in the brilliant lad, and led him rapidly towards fulfilment; whilst the young fellow gained by the innate French genius of Poussin, who urged him to the full development of that high gift of landscape towards which he early showed his bent, at the same time coaxing him to achieve perfection in the painting of the figure as aid to his landscape. Dughet benefited also in that he had to go through no long tedious years of pot-boiling in order to come to recognition. He stepped into the ken of Poussin's patrons from the start, so that he was an accepted master on the edge of manhood, scarce out of his teens, with a heavy demand for his works in full flood upon him. Working in several mediums, Dughet achieved success second only to that of Claude Lorrain and his great master Poussin. He decorated palaces and churches,

WHEREIN THE ART OF FRANCE BURSTS INTO SONG

but it is to his easel-pictures that he owes his highest fame. His life was long and the amount of his work was very large. Unfortunately he painted on a dark red ground which, with time, has darkened his art. Painting the ideal, he came to nobility of conception, and to a fine sense of arrangement. He loved the blue skies of Italy, with majestic white clouds swinging before the gentle breeze; and he bathed his landscape in the sun's glorious flood, that sets the distant hills in a warm translucent glamour.

Gaspard Dughet lived his life in Italy; and at Rome he died in 1675.

Such, then, was the state of art in France when Louis XIII died. Her finest genius at home was evolving in the art of Le Nain and Bourdon; whilst in Rome her great ones were Poussin and Claude, who though creating their art abroad, were destined to lead the national genius, and indeed to affect the Dutch and Flemish achievement, whilst Claude was to inspire the greatest landscape-painters of all time in the sublime art of English Turner. But the general trend of painting in France was uncreative and un-national; imitation can never create; and the vision of Italy was threatening death to the national genius. In portraiture no great Frenchman shows signs of vitality; and we must look to the Fleming Philip de Champaigne (1602-1674) as the sole genius of this age in that realm—as his fine full-length of *Richelieu* and his *Dead Christ*, both at the Louvre, prove.

From the middle of the sixteen-hundreds the artists were already divided into Italianists and Flanders men, as "Poussinistes" and "Rubenistes."

CHAPTER IX

WHEREIN THE MOCK-HEROIC AGE OF KING SUN BRINGS FORTH ITS AUTOCRAT OF ALL THE ARTS

KING SUN

LOUIS XIV, 1643-1715

THE GRAND MANNER

Louis the Fourteenth came to the throne of France a mere child. The queen-mother, Anne of Austria, at once swept aside the Council of Regency and assumed full power, with Cardinal Mazarin (1602-1661), Richelieu's apt pupil, as her minister. The choice of this pupil of her enemy Richelieu spoke well for her insight and her self-discipline. Her confidence was well requited. She needed a strong support. The nobles and Huguenots made their bid for power—and, except for Mazarin, the brain of the nation was against the Crown. The young Duke of Enghien, chivalrous eldest son of the Condé, whose greatness the prescience of Richelieu had foreseen—indeed, the Cardinal married him to his niece, the beautiful and noble Claire Clémence de Maillé—came to the front, and was soon the idol of the nation ; and indeed he cut a fine figure—he was to be the able, the "Great Condé," maker of victories. Five days after Louis xiii died, Enghien, at twenty-two, destroyed for ever the mighty tradition of the Spaniard in war at Rocroi. Victory after victory crowned his every effort. He succeeded in 1646, at twenty-five, on the death of his great father, to the principality of Condé and a magnificent fortune. Mazarin's dread of his power and influence led to his betrayal of Condé before Lerida, and Condé's consequent first great repulse. At last Mazarin's greed, misgovernment, and prodigality brought the Court foul of the nobles and the people. By 1648 had begun the mighty civil war of the Fronde that threatened to do

for France what the Commonwealth in England was doing for England. Condé took first one side, then the other. He fell foul of Turenne. The young king, the queen-mother, and Mazarin had to go into retreat. But internecine strife brought the triumphs and mighty promise of the Fronde toppling to the ground — the rebellion of the aristocracy and magistracy on behalf of the people to control the Crown failed, and flung back France for more than a hundred years. Mazarin returned in triumph to Paris in 1653. Henceforth France was to be ruled by the monarchy, without pretence of a constitution.

WHEREIN THE MOCK-HEROIC AGE OF KING SUN BRINGS FORTH ITS AUTOCRAT OF ALL THE ARTS

Dunkirk fell to Turenne and the allies ; Condé withdrew—yet a year afterwards Condé was restored to all his honours, his sentence of death and outlawry annulled. Still a year later, the king married a Spanish Infanta on the Isle of Pheasants—Velazquez, as we have seen, arranging the pageantry, to be stricken down with that illness that ended in death, in the year that Charles the Second came to rule over England. The Isle of Pheasants also saw death beckon to Mazarin ; he broke down, and died the following year, leaving four of his nieces married to powerful lords—one to the Prince Conti.

In 1648 Mazarin had founded the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, five years after the boy king, Louis XIV, came to the throne. He had created institutions to centre the artistic and literary genius of France about the royal house ; it was part of his large ambition to make France the glory of Europe. He had in his house, as intendant, one Colbert, who, brought up in his tradition, was to further that intention.

The reign of Louis XIV was to see France dominate Europe. When Mazarin died in 1661, the rule of the cardinals was at an end. Harlay de Chanvallon, president of the council of the clergy, turning to ask Louis to whom he was to go for decisions in affairs of State, received the reply : "I am the State." And it was soon seen that the will of the young king was thenceforth to prevail ; here was a man who intended to brook no challenge to his imperious temper, whether he blundered or won to victory. Louis saw his land made waste and near to bankruptcy

THE GRAND MANNER

by the wars of Richelieu and Mazarin; he saw industry and agriculture at a low ebb; he decided to govern as king as the dying Mazarin had advised.

The dying Mazarin had formed for the king a council, with Segur as chancellor, Le Tellier as war minister, Lyonne as foreign minister, and the vile Fouquet as minister of finance, and had recommended to him Colbert, then the intendant of the cardinal's household. Colbert (1619-1683), a promising, fearless, and able man, denounced Fouquet to the king; and in a fortunate moment Louis dismissed Fouquet and set up Colbert in his place as comptroller-general. This great man, son to a wool-merchant at Rheims, had a commercial genius that was to be baffled by no difficulty of problem. The enmity of the corrupt in office he beat down without mercy. He set his tireless brain to the ideal of making France supreme in the commerce of Europe. Wise as he was ruthless in economy, he restored confidence to the trading classes. He increased revenue and reduced taxes. He thereby was soon in favour both with the king and the people. When he was convinced of financial soundness in any enterprise, he poured money into support of it. He founded colonies to increase the outlet for French industry. And he foresaw the value of making France supreme in Europe in the decorative arts. He saw it, 'tis true, as a commercial value; 'tis equally true he did not see that the freer the artist the greater his art—he was not concerned with art; he was concerned with the financial advantage that might accrue to the State as dispensers of art. He was a born organiser. He saw that Flanders had a great traffic in tapestries; that, in Brussels, tapestry was her chief industry. He decided that France should create the industry. He reorganised the Gobelins' factory; he saw that the designs must be made by great artists. He looked about and decided on Charles Le Brun. That choice was to mean much for France.

At the death of Mazarin, then, Louis the Fourteenth took the reins of government into his own hands, and burst upon France in splendour. Mazarin had prepared the way.

WHEREIN THE MOCK-HEROIC AGE OF KING SUN BRINGS FORTH ITS AUTOCRAT OF ALL THE ARTS

At once his Academy became a part of that instrument of grandeur. The art of France leaped to portray the splendour of King Sun; it formed a style attune to the mock-heroic spirit and elaborate formality of the age; and in nothing does the new French style that rapidly came into the vogue display its essentially French vision, revealed through the Flemish genius enhanced by the polished outlook of Italy, than in the style of subject and the portraiture that set in.

The critics who laud Rubens and Van Dyck are wont to sneer at Le Brun and Mignard, Rigaud and Largillière; but these men were just as intensely French in their art as were Rubens and Van Dyck Flemish in theirs. The Italian spectacles none of them ever wholly forgot; but the Frenchmen uttered their age just as truly as the Flemings uttered theirs. And he who demands of these Frenchmen an air that was foreign to that age has no sense of the significance of art.

LE BRUN
1619–1690

Charles Le Brun, born in Paris on the 24th of the February of 1619, early displayed artistic gifts; and the chancellor to the king was so struck with the young fellow's draughtsmanship that he gave him lodging in his own house and placed him as 'prentice to Simon Vouet. The young fellow made rapid strides during the few years under his master, when Nicolas Poussin came from Rome, and Le Brun at once fell under the glamour of his genius. He soon persuaded his patron to let him return to Rome with Poussin, and in Rome he dwelt for four years; the atmosphere of Rome expanded the blossoming gifts of the young fellow, and he was soon creating a reputation there.

Le Brun came back to Paris to find fame waiting for him; his repute had gone before, and orders for work were already pouring in. He was soon one of the leading artists of France; and when Mazarin founded the Academy in 1648, the name of Le Brun was amongst the foundation members. He was later

THE GRAND MANNER

to become professor, then chancellor, then rector, then director. His capacity for organisation appealed at once to Colbert when he came to power; and in his scheme for making France dominate Europe in the arts and crafts, Colbert's eyes straightway settled upon Le Brun as organiser of victory. In 1660 Le Brun was made director of the Gobelins at Colbert's instigation. Having led up to his appointment, Colbert gave him a free hand, with the one direction to organise the factory. The subjects, the designs, the method of carrying them out—all were left free to Le Brun. Le Brun himself designed most—his *History of the King*, the *Elements*, the *Seasons*, the *History of Alexander*, the *Acts of the Apostles*. He flung himself at the task with his wonted address and his autocratic intention. Whether the design of Le Brun, the treatment of tapestries as huge oil-paintings, be of the essence of that craft or not, he at least directed the making of as fine tapestries as ever left a loom—the works of Gobelins under Le Brun are world-famous. As a matter of fact, tapestries were now losing their prime use, and when a function goes out of a craft it becomes an anachronism—however brilliant.

Le Brun thence absolutely dominated the whole art movement of France. And under Colbert, with Le Brun for lieutenant, the whole aim of all the arts was forced and compelled into a system. Colbert concentrated the arts into one definite aim; he bent the intention of the arts and crafts into the design of glorifying a scheme of decoration that should outclass the rest of Europe to the splendour of France. In Le Brun he found the smith who could weld the arts upon this anvil.

Le Brun gave all his strength to the Gobelins; yet he found time to paint an astoundingly large number of other works. In 1662 he became the principal painter to the king, who ennobled him. Not content with all these varied activities, he founded in 1666 the French Academy in Rome, with the aim of luring the younger Frenchmen to the Italian apprenticeship. At Rome he was made a prince of the Academy of St. Luke. In 1667 Louis took him with him upon his Flemish campaign.

WHEREIN THE MOCK-HEROIC AGE OF KING SUN BRINGS FORTH ITS AUTOCRAT OF ALL THE ARTS

The first blow that was struck at his supremacy was struck by death—his loyal friend Colbert died in 1683. There stepped into the shoes of Colbert his bitter enemy Louvois, who marked down for ruin every one who had been in the dead minister's favour. And Le Brun fell with the rest.

The king, whose industry was prodigious, was fiercely jealous of any interference in affairs of state, and directed the destinies of France without assistance as far as in him lay. But taken up with the intricate problems of high policies, he could and did give scant attention to lesser details. Louvois was therefore master of internal affairs in the kingdom, such as art. He struck at Le Brun, and set up Mignard in his place; and Le Brun's haughty treatment of Mignard left scant sense of mercy in the new painter to the king. Le Brun's autocratic nature could ill bear rebuff; and his last years were passed in sullen resentment, and fretted by a bitter feeling of injustice, which did his health little good. He died at the Gobelins on the 12th of February 1690; not living long enough to see the setting of King Sun nor the collapse of the mock-heroic art and stilted grandeur of the age of which he was the art-lord and director.

Le Brun had found the art of his country in a sorry condition; and by dogged will and tireless industry he set up a grandiose aim in art, founded on Italian thoroughness of craftsmanship, which was to create a style of French utterance that thoroughly suited the mock-heroic age in which he lived. He made the Gobelins tapestries the finest products of that age. And if his art be not inspired by great originality and vital force, at least he caught the spirit of his times in brilliant fashion, and wrought his stilted art not without magnificence.

De la Fosse (1636-1716), one of the best of Le Brun's pupils, was to become a fine and just judge of art in the coming century; and his wide and catholic taste was to serve Watteau well.

THE GRAND MANNER

MIGNARD
1610 – 1695

The severe and academic art of Le Brun was very different from the more innately French vision and instinct of his rival Mignard. Le Brun's strong personality fitted the academic aims of Colbert to a nicety, and compelled his aim upon the art of the age far more decisively than did the personality of Mignard, a finer artist and a more thoroughly French one. Mignard had indeed more kinship with the more essentially French art of the coming century; and his supplanting of Le Brun probably largely led to the kicking over of the stilted fashions when Louis XV came to the throne of France—of which we shall see more soon. There has long been a fashion to sneer at his art; but Mignard was a fine portrait-painter.

It so chanced that in the year of 1610 that Henry of Navarre fell to the assassin's knife, there was born at Troyes in Champagne a child, PIERRE MIGNARD, to be known in the world of art in after years as Mignard "Le Romain," so called to avoid confusion with his elder brother NICOLAS MIGNARD, known as "Mignard of Avignon," who was to come to lesser fame.

The boy Pierre Mignard was marked down for the practice of medicine, but upset the plans for a medical career by showing such marked gifts of artistry that his father, with a sigh, turned from the dream of a settled career for his lad, and sent the twelve-year-old boy instead for a twelvemonth into the studio of one BOUCHER, a mediocre painter of Bourges, whose art, whatever it was, is forgot in the blaze of that very different and mightier genius of the same name whom we shall see glittering over the France of Louis XV as "the glory of Paris" a hundred years afterwards. The thirteen-year-old Mignard is next found studying the art-treasures at Fontainebleau, whence drifting back to youthful endeavour in his native town of Troyes, he chanced to be one of several engaged for the decoration of the chapel in the Château at Coubert-en-Brie, belonging to the

WHEREIN THE MOCK-HEROIC AGE OF KING SUN BRINGS FORTH ITS AUTOCRAT OF ALL THE ARTS

Marshal de Vitry; and, as good luck would have it, the Marshal, handsome fellow, struck by the youngster's astounding promise, sent him to Paris forthwith to the studio of Vouet. So the lad found himself in the nursery of French art of his day, such as it was. Yet French art of a kind there was, in which the national genius was beginning to utter itself, though steeped in the Flemish tradition, and vexed by Italianisation.

Mignard came to Paris at De Vitry's cost in 1632, to Vouet's studio, to find Richelieu supreme. Vouet seems to have had the seeing eye; and a few years later he backed his prophetic soul by offering the young fellow Mignard his daughter in marriage, which, most unchivalrously, our Pierre Mignard evaded, having an eye the rather upon the student's dream of Italy. For Rome he made in 1635, being twenty-five, careless of the struggles of Richelieu to keep the reins of power in his crafty fingers. At Rome Mignard found his studio-comrade Du Fresnoy, and thenceforth lived in that lifelong happy friendship that was to be between the two men. For twenty-two years Mignard remained in Italy, hence his nickname of "Le Romain," though he went awhile to Venice also. At Rome he slowly won to a large reputation. Portraiture early took up a large part of his time, the number of his sitters rapidly increasing—three Popes in turn sat to him. The number of religious pictures painted by him in these years was very large.

Mignard was in Rome, painting portraits, and had married in 1655 the beautiful Anna Avalora, the daughter of an architect—she whose handsome face is the face of the Madonna in several altarpieces painted by him—hence the name of "Mignardes" given to such Madonna-pieces of his, when the young Louis being now fourteen years king, Mignard received the royal command that called him back to France in 1657.

On his homeward journey—he had left his wife and children in Rome—he was stricken down by a dangerous illness, and stayed some months with his elder brother at Avignon, he who is known as Mignard d'Avignon, and there he met and became

THE GRAND MANNER

intimate with the witty dramatist Molière, whose portrait he several times painted. To Paris he was soon again on his way, arriving to settle down with his old friend Du Fresnoy, and to enter into that wide and distinguished vogue and large career which made his fame as a portrait-painter, the limner of his age—painting the king and all the royal house; and, above all, winning immortality as the painter of the Court beauties.

Mignard came back to a France, to a Paris, strangely different from the Paris he had left twenty-two years gone by. A new king reigned over the land—as lax in love as the other had been pure in his relations with women—as masterful as the other had been weak and indeterminate and hesitant—as much a man of action as the other had been a dreamer. Young King Splendid ruled over the land. The age of the Grand Monarque was being created, an age of pompous splendour for France. In nothing shall you find the new spirit that was abroad more markedly set forth than in the portrait of the little princess at Versailles, painted by Mignard—the handsome little daughter of Louis the Fourteenth, *Françoise Marie de Bourbon*, blowing bubbles, her small spaniel yapping at her side, and her macaw at her feet.

Thus it was in a Paris ablaze with glory that Mignard wrought his art. Not content with portraiture, he was soon embarked upon many decorative works at the palaces of St. Cloud, Versailles, and elsewhere; and feeling secure of his fame and position at Court and in the world of fashion, he sent to Italy for his wife and children.

The rivalries of Mignard and Le Brun, are they not a part of this magnificent age of the splendours? Mignard's jealousy, so deep and black that he refused academic rank in that Royal Academy that Mazarin had created, rather than take the seat of Immortality, or a fortieth part of Immortality, that made him sit below his rival; even joining the rival Academy of St. Luke, and leading it to the faction-fights between the two! They divided the town of fashion.

King Sun's great minister Colbert dead, and Louvois his

IV

MIGNARD
1610 – 1695

"FRANÇOISE DE BOURBON"

(VERSAILLES)

In nothing does the new French mock-heroic style declare itself more markedly than in this portrait of the little Princess painted by Mignard, the handsome little daughter of Louis XIV., blowing bubbles.

WHEREIN THE MOCK-HEROIC AGE OF KING SUN BRINGS FORTH ITS AUTOCRAT OF ALL THE ARTS

bitter enemy in power and stripping Colbert's honours from such as he had honoured, Mignard could strut it as the successful rival at last; and at Le Brun's death he deigned to accept academic honours, as indeed he well might, considering that the whole of such honours were flung into his lap at a single sitting. Louis the Fourteenth paid him high tribute; and Mignard painted the king again and again. But he came to this success already supreme—he could look about him and discover no rival; and until his death he remained supreme in the French art-world. He was at work upon the design for a large decoration for the dome of the Invalides when the Great Reaper took him in 1695. His name has passed into the word *Mignardese* for affected elegance.

Mignard died just too early to behold the new art that was being born in France with the coming of Watteau, wherein grace and elegance were to usurp the mock-heroic; the hint of which new art of elegance is sounded in BELLE's well-known portrait of the girl with a monkey—*Marie Anne de Bourbon-Conti, Duchesse de Bourbon*, the eldest daughter of Louis de Bourbon, Prince of Conti, the dainty girl who, born in 1689, was to die at thirty-one, in that year that the Scotsman Law brought so many great houses of France to ruin when the Regent was lord of the land, and France was weary of the mock-heroic posture.

VAN DER MEULEN
1643 – 1690

We have already glanced at the art of the Flemish painter Van der Meulen; but he became so absolutely a part of the artistic achievement of France in these years that he is often rated as a French painter.

ADAM FRANÇOIS VAN DER MEULEN, born at Brussels in 1643, became pupil to Snayers, and was early painting battle-pictures and the life of the soldier. He gave his art to the pomp and glamour of war rather than to its brutalities; the gorgeous uniforms caught his eye, and he revelled in the camp-life,

THE GRAND MANNER

shunning the horrors of the battlefield. Invited to Paris, he designed a series of tapestries; and under Le Brun he painted most of the series of the *History of the King*. To Le Brun, who ranked him high, and directed his art towards his large decorative achievement, he was loyal; and he developed his art largely in Le Brun's manner. Going with the king upon his campaigns, and being present at most of the important battles and sieges, Van der Meulen wrought the impression of them in the grandiose manner that appealed to the king, to Colbert, and to Le Brun; and by consequence not only held the royal favour and the loyal friendship of Le Brun, but had so wide a vogue that his works were repeated a considerable number of times; and he was in wide favour when he died in 1690. The Louvre and Versailles are rich in his works.

COYPEL
1628 – 1707

NOËL COYPEL, born at Paris in 1628, was to become the father and grandfather of a family that won to considerable distinction in these years and in the first half of the seventeen-hundreds that followed, though they were none of them to reach to the heights, nor was their influence to be great.

Sent early in life to Orleans as pupil to PONCET, Coypel soon came to Paris to be trained under QUILLERIER. An historical painter, who founded his art on the classics, his severe, hard, and cold art, whilst a chill affair in his paintings, was well fitted for the decorative creation of tapestries in which he achieved his highest work. His vision was wholly Italian. He continued the dull accent of Fontainebleau; but he was held in considerable favour, being elected to the Academy in 1663, and being made director of the French Academy in Rome from 1672 to 1675. His tapestries of the *Triumphs of the Gods* are his masterpieces, said to have been designed from cartoons by Raphael; the series had a wide vogue, being woven four times. Coypel died in 1707.

ANTOINE COYPEL, the son of Noël Coypel, born at Paris in

1661, was not a painter of rank, but, like his father, his best work was done for the Gobelins. He died in 1722, having been chief painter to the king.

NOËL NICOLAS COYPEL, another son of Noël Coypel, born in 1692, died in 1734.

CHARLES ANTOINE COYPEL was the son of Antoine Coypel, therefore grandson of Noël Coypel. Born in 1694, he came to manhood after Louis XIV's death, and belongs to the next century. He was to win the royal favour like his kinsmen before him, to design the well-known *Don Quixote* tapestries for the Gobelins, to become keeper of the king's pictures; and in 1747 he was to be made chief painter to Louis XV, as his father had been to the king before him. He died in the mid-century, in 1752.

Other followers of Le Brun were CHARLES DE LA FOSSE (1636-1716), a man of artistic taste far greater than his achievement, and a rare friend to Watteau; BON BOULOGNE (1649-1717) and Louis Boulogne, his brother (1654-1733).

MONNOYER

1634 – 1699

One of the best painters of this age was the flower-painter JEAN BAPTISTE MONNOYER (1634-1699), who however brought the grand manner even into the garden's harvest.

COURTOIS

1621 – 1676

JACQUES COURTOIS, the battle-painter, was better known as BORGOGNONE or LE BOURGUIGNON, for, though born in France, his training and his art were Italian, and in Italy most of his life was spent. He had a quick brush and caught movement on the wing.

PARROCEL

1648 – 1704

JOSEPH PARROCEL, pupil to Courtois, after long years in Rome, coming back to France in 1675 glorified the royal campaigns of Louis XIV.

PAINTING

THE GRAND MANNER

JOUVENET
1644 – 1717

JEAN JOUVENET is best known for his fine *Descent from the Cross* at the Louvre. Founding his art on that of Rubens, he came near to reaching greatness.

SANTERRE
1658 – 1717

JEAN BAPTISTE SANTERRE was another painter who just missed greatness, being steeped in the atmosphere of the mock-heroic. His mastery of the nude is revealed in his *Susannah and the Elders* at the Louvre.

CHAPTER X

CONCERNING THE RISE OF THE GREAT PORTRAIT-PAINTERS UNDER KING SUN

CONCERNING THE RISE OF THE GREAT PORTRAIT-PAINTERS UNDER KING SUN

Now whilst Le Brun and Van der Meulen represent the State historical painting of the splendid years of King Sun, the highest artistic utterance of the age was to be the work of its five great portrait-painters, Mignard, Lefebvre, Rigaud, Largillière and Desportes. Now Mignard also represents that age; but he had in his art something of that coming sense of grace and elegance that was to burst upon France in the next century. In landscape art was at its height in Claude, whose art holds the sense of grandeur of this time in more poetic form than that of any other painter. But the mock-heroic swaggering atmosphere of the time is seen at its fullest in the portraiture of Rigaud. Both Rigaud and Largillière were to live well into the next age, so wholly different an age to the one that bred them; but they remained to the end essentially the portraitists of the years of the Grand Manner. Largillière had in his art an utterance of charm more akin to the seventeen-hundreds. Rigaud was the supreme type of the France of the Grand Monarque.

It was the reign of grandeur and high ambition. Louis the Fourteenth took the pose of demigod, and France put on stiff brocade and the grand manner, took the heroic strut, and thought in continents. Louis looked at politics on a large scale; essayed to make Europe his footstool; worked for large results. Magnificence became the breath of the whole people. Life was looked upon as a majestic pageant; the grandiose was the sole aim—in politics, in manner, in conversation, in pose. There was no eye for small things. Houses were built as great palaces. Rooms were large and splendid. Art had by consequence to be in the grand manner, or perish. The portrait

THE GRAND MANNER

could not concern itself with small details; it had to be large, and to be treated largely, or it was lost in its huge surroundings. The portrait thereby came to express the age in astounding fashion. It is the habit to-day to sneer at this portraiture in the grand manner; the sneer should be kept for the age that produced it, not for the art. The splendour and the genius of the portraiture of Rigaud and of Largillière lie in the fact that they uttered the spirit of the age with astounding power—as nothing else could have uttered it better. The art of Rigaud is compact of that swaggering, bombastic, truculent aristocratic air that was breathed by the century; his figures stand dominant, aggressive, with the brutality of the age cloaked under a splendid magnificence and a demigoddish etiquette.

LEFEBVRE
1632 – 1675

CLAUDE LEFEBVRE has yet to come into his own. He brought to the painting of the portrait great qualities. Employing a masterly and vigorous touch, and seeing deep into character, he painted his age with rare power. The Louvre has two portraits by him, *Master and Pupil*, and a *Man*, which reveal his great gifts and his fine artistry. His handling is almost Dutch, and Dutch at its best, in its forthright will.

He went for some years to London, where he won the favour of the Merry Monarch, and painted many of the Court. The National Portrait Gallery possesses his portrait of *The Reverend Isaac Barrow*.

RIGAUD
1659 – 1743

The pageant that Velazquez arranged upon the Isle of Pheasants was not only to be a sad affair for Velazquez and for Mazarin—the bride herself, Spanish Infanta Maria Theresa, was to part from her gloomy father in order to go to twenty-three years of marriage that were to put many an humiliation upon her. King Sun was given to much loving. During his

CONCERNING THE RISE OF THE GREAT PORTRAIT-PAINTERS UNDER KING SUN

earlier years of sovereignty he had cast his eyes upon the unfortunate Louise de la Vallière, who, the mother of two of his children, entered a convent in 1674 a heart-broken woman. The beautiful Marchioness of Montespan usurped her place, becoming the mother of eight of Louis' children, who were all declared legitimate, and married into the noblest families of France. The Montespan, into her stately life, brought as governess, to teach her children, the granddaughter of the famous historian d'Aubigné, and widow of the comic poet Scarron. In visiting his mistress, the king became enamoured of her governess; and soon Françoise d'Aubigné was herself mistress of the king's will. She held that supremacy over the king until death took him; and as Madame de Maintenon she governed France for over thirty years. The queen, wearied of the humiliating part she played in the affection of her pious lord, died in 1683; and in the following year the king was secretly married to the Maintenon by the keeper of his conscience, his confessor La Chaise—in the presence of the Archbishop of Paris.

Now it so chanced that there came to Paris in 1681, two years before the queen died, and whilst the pious Maintenon was fighting the Montespan for the favour of the pious king's love, a youth of twenty-two, to study art at the Royal Academy; a youth who little thought that he would one day enter the chaste palace of the king. HYACINTHE FRANÇOIS HONORET MATHIAS PIERRE-LE-MARTYR ANDRÉ JEAN RIGAUD-Y-ROY—though his name was longer than his purse—had been born at Perpignan on the 20th of the July of 1659; and, losing his artist father at eight (his grandfather also had been an artist), had been brought up by his greatly beloved mother with his eyes upon the art career. She sent the boy at fourteen to work for four years at Montpellier under the local painters there, whence he went to Lyons, thence to Paris, to the Academy schools, in 1681. Here, a year after he came, he won the first prize with his *Cain building the City of Enoch*, and attracted the notice of Mignard's great rival Le Brun, who

THE GRAND MANNER

strongly urged him to keep to portraiture and to abandon all thought of the Italian tour. Rigaud took the astute advice, and improved his style by close study of the work of the great Flemish master Van Dyck. He came to a dignity of performance and acquired a grandness of manner that fits in consummate fashion the splendid age of the Grand Monarque which he was to immortalise, and of which he was to be the supreme artist. At first his sitters were of the burgess class; but about 1687 he was received into the Academy, and began to be sought after by fashion, when the brother of the king sat to him. The genius of the man at once leaped to the utterance of the impression aroused in his senses by the elaborate grandeur of the Court and the demigoddish strut of the aristocracy.

Rigaud had been ambitious to enter the Academy in its highest grade as "historical painter"—for this Academy had grades, the historical painter being greater than the portrait-painter, and so on—and he sent as his "reception-piece" in 1687 a picture of *The Nativity*; but that body would only elect him as a portrait-painter—he had to wait till 1700, when at the height of his vogue and without a peer in his realm, before he was raised to the upper grade of historical painter of that Academy of which he was to be Rector in 1733. Honours soon began to pour upon him. He was ennobled in 1709.

Rigaud had a large practice and a great vogue, that were equalled by his industry and his great gifts. He painted thirty to forty portraits a year; and they were elaborate affairs, in the grand manner.

Both Largillière and Rigaud were essentially painters of the age of Louis the Great; yet they lived to see that fashion entirely disappear, and a new art come into France wholly different from it. When Louis the Great died in 1715, his system, his grandeur, and his splendour were in ruins. The year 1704 saw the doors close on the last Salon of the years of Louis the Fourteenth, owing to the bankrupt state of the old king's treasury—Rigaud having the place of honour thereat

CONCERNING THE RISE OF THE GREAT PORTRAIT-PAINTERS UNDER KING SUN

with his royal portraits. Those doors did not open again for thirty-three years, when Louis the Fifteenth, unborn when they were shut, was king over the land. Rigaud hobbled through the Salon of 1737, an old man, blinking at the change that had come over French art. He stood bewildered at the new style, baffled by the new spirit, wherein grace and elegance had taken the place of pomp and ceremony and the mock-heroic.

He had painted the Grand Monarque's great-grandson, *Louis XV as a Child*, on his coming to the lordship over France in his stead—with all the emblems of kingship about him as the boy sits upon the mighty throne of a great people. The grand manner of King Sun is still over it all; and the mock-heroic abides awhile by the throne. The sickly little fellow was to have the profligate Duke of Orleans as Regent over France and him for awhile. The Regent, amongst his other wild-cat schemes to bolster up the credit of France, encouraged the mad gamble in paper-money, and the traffic in fabulous wealth across the Atlantic invented by a blackguardly gambler, the Scotsman Law, that had its madness also in England in the great South Sea Bubble. The crash came to France about 1720; and in that crash many who had been rich found themselves poor. Artists not less than others. Rigaud, then a man of sixty, lost his all; and had to ask for, and got, a pension in his old age. But his art, though gone out of fashion, served him to the end. He died in Paris, after sixty-two years of prosperity, on the 27th of December 1743, an old man of eighty-four. He had painted five kings, all the princes of the blood, and nearly every man of distinction of his age. He gave them all that stately atmosphere of the age; and his canvases hold a dignity that compels respect.

Three years after he went to his grave, Nicolas Largillière, three years older than he, followed him.

Rigaud wisely sought inspiration in the Flemish achievement which is akin to the French, instead of seeking the alien Italian spirit. His art stands out as French; no one can

THE GRAND MANNER

mistake it for anything but French. Living simply, his kindly nature kept him on the best terms of friendship with his fellow-artists, and he was the intimate of his great rival Largillière; by consequence he knew nothing of the wounds and bitter jealousies that were the lot of Le Brun and Mignard. His rich and sumptuous art created the impression of the age as that of no other created it; and it is only the academic of mind who demand of him a different art like that of some one else.

Nor must it be thought that Rigaud worked upon a mere convention. The grand manner was employed, and fitly employed, with all the resounding stops out, in his famous *Louis XIV* at the Louvre, or his famous *Bossuet*; but he was too fine an artist to put the kingly pose upon his portrait of *Himself*, of *Le Brun*, of the sculptor *Desjardins*, of *Cardinal de Polignac*, of *La Quintine and his Wife*, of *Lafontaine*—all triumphs of character fittingly uttered; amongst his supreme masterpieces also are the young *Duc de Lesdiguières*, the portrait of his own beautiful wife *Elisabeth de Gouay*, and the double-portrait of his mother, *Marie Serre*, at the Louvre.

An European celebrity, in his will in 1707, made three years before his marriage, he makes provision for his little eleven-year-old natural daughter. He married Elisabeth le Juge, a widow. In 1706 he was invited to paint his own portrait for the Uffizi, which was lost; he painted it again ten years later.

Living simply, methodical, industrious, he painted sometimes as many as sixty portraits a year, to say nothing of touching up copies of some of them made by pupils. Asked by Louis XV in 1727 if he were married, he answered: "I am married, but have no children, thank God!" His marriage in 1710 brought him no money, and he had not been naturalised. Passionately attached to his wife, at her death, in the March of 1743, the old man sank, dying in the December.

V

RIGAUD

1659–1743

"LOUIS XV"

(VERSAILLES)

Rigaud painted the Grand Monarque's great-grandson who was to succeed him as King over France, as he sits upon the throne of a great people, a child—he became King at five. The grand manner of Louis Quatorze is still over all.

OF PAINTING

LARGILLIÈRE
1656 - 1746

CONCERNING THE RISE OF THE GREAT PORTRAIT-PAINTERS UNDER KING SUN

Born at Paris, of French parents, NICOLAS LARGILLIÈRE saw the light on the 10th of October 1656, and was taken as an infant to Antwerp, his father having settled in the Flemish city as a merchant. Taken for a few months in his ninth year by his parents to England, the boy, on his return to Antwerp, was apprenticed to the artist Antoine Goubeau, for whose pictures he was early painting the still-life details. It was in Charles the Second's mid-reign, in 1674, when the notorious Frenchwoman Louise de Querouaïlle, sent as the spy of France to seduce the Merry Monarch, was supreme in the favour of the gadding fancy of Charles as Duchess of Portsmouth, that the young French painter Largillière set foot again in London town at eighteen to seek his fortune. Under Sir Peter Lely he was employed in the royal palaces, thereby coming to the notice of Charles the Second, whose portrait he made; and his six years' stay in London saw him thereafter painting many of the English nobility. At Lely's death in 1680, with growing reputation, he went to Paris at twenty-three, where he at once came into wide vogue amongst the rich burgess folk and the professional classes. Fortune there sent him the friendship of Van der Meulen and of Le Brun, the all-powerful autocrat in French art, who proved himself a staunch and loyal and warm-hearted ally to the young fellow, as he was also soon to prove to Rigaud.

At thirty, in 1686, a year after Charles the Second died in England with a genial jest upon his lips, Largillière in Paris had been received into the French Academy in its highest grade as "historical painter," no doubt largely owing to the influence of his friend Le Brun. Two years later he came to England, at the call of James II, in time to paint the king and his queen and infant son before the gods revealed the coming danger.

In the fateful year of 1688 there was born to the second consort of the English king, Mary of Modena, a son who was christened James Francis Edward Stuart, to be better known to

THE GRAND MANNER

history as the "Old Pretender." The birth of this little Prince of Wales in St. James's Palace to the dour King James II decided the whole country, Tory and Whig, fearful of the child being brought up a Catholic, to invite William of Orange and his queen to the throne of England. Indeed, the news of the birth of the little Prince of Wales was received with loud laughter throughout the land—he had obviously been smuggled into St. James's Palace—it was all a part of King James's knavery—so the tongues wagged. James had been stealthily increasing the army, and was at Hounslow with the troops when news came of the Acquittal of the Bishops. As he rode from camp he heard a great shout behind him. "What is that?" asked the king. "Nothing," came the reply, "only the soldiers are glad that the bishops are acquitted!" "Do you call that nothing?" growled the king, and fell a-brooding, his long sallow face scowling amidst the dark love-locks—for he had packed the bench of judges. That shout told him that the army he had gathered to awe the people was with the people.

It was whilst the obstinate king and the determined nation stood sullenly at duel, that James called to England the French artist to paint his portrait and that of his second queen, Mary of Modena, and of the infant Prince of Wales, whether smuggled or unsmuggled. Largillière, now thirty-two, painted all the three. The throne of England was soon to know James no more; scarcely had Largillière returned to France than, on the 23rd of December, James II embarked on his exile. He made thereafter his futile attempt to regain the crown; he but sacrificed good Irish blood in vain endeavour against Dutch William. Louis XIV had solemnly sworn to recognise William the Third as King of England, and to defend his claim as such at the Peace of Ryswick; but, as James lay dying at St. Germain, Louis entered his bedroom and, regardless of his oath and covenant, promised the dying man to acknowledge his son as King of England at his death. It was not the least treacherous of King Sun's many treacheries; and it was to cost the Highlanders of Scotland a terrible blood-letting.

Largillière painted the *Old Pretender in* 1695, *standing beside his sister, Princess Louisa*, in that canvas now at the National Portrait Gallery—and the likeness proves that there was little smuggling of the Prince of Wales; indeed, he inherited his father's follies, and was the miserable leader of the great Highland rebellion of "the Fifteen." Largillière was to be the favourite painter of the exiled Stuarts. He painted the *Young Pretender* and his brother the *Cardinal Duke of York*, both at the National Portrait Gallery.

Meanwhile Nicolas Largillière was coming into wider and ever wider repute. He was famed in his day for his historical paintings; but, fortunately for his repute, his vogue as a portrait-painter was great, and though he never courted the royal favour, nor played the courtier to attract aristocratic sitters, his distinction of style and the dignity and splendour of his art drew the great to his studio. After the death of Le Brun and of Mignard, he held the foremost official rank in the French school, filling in turn all the high offices of the Academy. In the charm of his portraits of children he was unrivalled in his age. Professor of the Academy in 1705, in 1722 Largillière became rector of the Academy, in 1738 director, and in 1743 chancellor.

The year of 1715 that brought such disaster to the "Old Pretender," brought death to King Sun; and into the grave of the king went all the Pretender's hopes. The Regent Orleans soon made alliance with England, recognising the Hanoverian king, and being guaranteed in return the Orleans succession to the crown of France in case the sickly lad Louis xv did not live, or died without issue.

The man Largillière, like his art, was in marked contrast to his great fellow-artist Rigaud. He came to fortune, and he spent that fortune lavishly that he might drink of the life of his day to the full, living in splendour in a splendid house, in the fashionable quarter, like a prince of painters; and the great always flock to the successful man. His art does not contain that dominant, aggressive spirit of the age that Rigaud limned;

THE GRAND MANNER

even whilst he, too, utters the magnificence of that age, his quick ears also hear Prince Charming riding into France. His portraits have an allure denied to Rigaud, even if they have not the mock-heroic demigoddishness. He is far more intimate than Rigaud; his sitters are caught out of the official atmosphere of the time. Like Peter Lely, who greatly influenced him, he employs his colours in decorative fashion as harmonics, and he sets value upon these colour harmonics above the value of sincere truth; but he was right to create the mood of the thing seen as it was roused in his senses. Both Largillière and Lely are yet to be understood—to be judged by the skill with which they uttered their age, instead of by contrast with other artists of other ages. Largellière was not concerned with aping Michelangelo or another; he was concerned with stating the character of his own times; and he and Rigaud so stated it in consummate fashion. It is true that neither man reached to the profound deeps of human character, but Largillière was not greatly concerned with profound characters. He is blamed, like Lely, for lack of soul; but just as Lely caught the langourous sensuousness of the people of Charles's dissipated Court, so did Largillière catch the splendour of dress and the air and grand manner of his sitters in the imposing attitude of their day, and the mock-heroic mask behind which they hid their humanities. Both Lely and Largillière had a fine sense of character, and to deny it to them is to be blind. Largillière proves it in his famous portrait-group of *Himself, his Wife, and his Daughter*, at the Louvre, his portraits of the Stuarts, and his portrait of *Mademoiselle Duclos* at Chantilly, which are amongst his master-work. The Wallace has his portrait-group of *Louis XIV, his Son the Dauphin, his Grandson the Duc de Bourgogne, and the infant Duc d'Anjou, afterwards Louis XV, with Madame de Maintenon.* Berlin has his fine *Jean Forest*, palette in hand.

Largillière died on the 28th of March 1746, a rich man. It was his full-length portrait of *Le Brun* that won him into the Academy; and sharing with Rigaud the protection of Le Brun, fortune smiled upon him to the end.

VI

LARGILLIÈRE
1656 - 1746

"PRINCE JAMES STUART AND HIS SISTER LOUISA AS CHILDREN"

(National Portrait Gallery)

Here we see the "Old Pretender" as a boy of seven standing beside his sister the Princess Louisa. He was the child who was long supposed to have been smuggled into St James's Palace by the King's party in order to continue the succession.

CONCERNING THE RISE OF THE GREAT PORTRAIT-PAINTERS UNDER KING SUN

All his career he painted historical subjects as well as portraits, and never lost his liking for fruit and flowers and still-life and landscape. Dowered with a fine sense of arrangement, and with unerring instinct for the picturesque, Largillière was always happy in his groups, as revealed by his *Repas de Louis XIV* of 1687, and his *Mariage du Duc de Bourgogne* of 1697. And to him was largely due the coming of the fashion for historical portraits, or "portrait histories." When we consider the enormous number of portraits painted by Largillière —there were from 1200 to 1500 in Paris alone in the middle seventeen-hundreds—the high average of his achievement is remarkable. By 1700 he had rid his hand of all stiffness and formality; and his portrait of *Mademoiselle Barral* in 1701 sounds the note of the new century. His sitters now, for all their elaborate wigs, show the new animation. They are impatient to fling the mock-heroic from them and to show signs of life. Largillière loved red, and employed it in mass with great skill. A born painter, a fine craftsman, Largillière bridges the gulf between the mock-heroic, bombastic age of King Sun and the gracious art of Louis XV, which was to see the French utter their subtle and fragrant sense of charm.

CHAPTER XI

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH THE PAINTERS OF THE CHASE IN THE SPLENDID YEARS OF KING SUN

THE GRAND MANNER

THE hunting-picture was in full vogue in the Low Countries, and the wide interest taken in the chase by the French nobility was bound to create its French artists. Though it did not produce many, it brought forth two fine artists in the age of Louis the Fourteenth, Desportes and Oudry. Both men were, like Rigaud and Largillière, to live into the middle of the next century; but whilst their art, the painting of animals, was naturally less affected by the mock-heroic spirit of their age than were most subjects, they both caught the grand manner; and their art is founded upon the art of the sixteen-hundreds. Both show increasing interest in landscape.

DESPORTES

1661 – 1743

ALEXANDRE FRANÇOIS DESPORTES, born at Champigneul in Champagne on the 24th of February in 1661, became pupil to an obscure and drunken Fleming, Nicasius, who spent his days in the tavern; this fellow dying in 1678, the youth Desportes was left to shift for himself. This was fortune in disguise, for the young fellow went straight to Nature, and was soon the finest animal-painter of his age. He had looked upon the art of Snyders. But his great qualities were not confined to animal-painting; his pure training made him one of the greatest portrait-painters of his day. It is a thousand pities that he did not give his great talents more to portraiture. He was early in wide request. In 1695, his thirty-fourth year, he went to Warsaw in Poland, being greatly welcomed in that country, and painted the king, Johann Sobieski and his Court; but Louis the Fourteenth recalled him in the following year to France, and he was given a large amount of work in the royal palace.

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH THE PAINTERS OF THE CHASE IN THE SPLENDID YEARS OF KING SUN

He was at once greatly sought after by the nobles and the rich for the decoration of those large country-houses that were being built; and Versailles, Chantilly, the castle of Anet, Marley, La Muette, the Palais Royal, all employed his art. At the same time his vigorous easel-pictures were in great demand; his animals were so well painted, he had so true a grip of their form and character, that he stands the peer of the great Flemings. His famous portrait of *Himself as a Huntsman*, with his dogs and quarry, at the Louvre reveals all his gifts of portraiture and animal-painting at their best; it was painted as his "reception-piece" on election to the Academy, which he entered in 1699; and he shows therein a sincerity and force that place him in the foremost rank of his age.

Desportes died in Paris on the 15th of April 1743.

OUDRY
1689–1755

Born at Paris in 1689, JEAN BAPTISTE OUDRY was twenty-eight years, a generation, younger than his great fellow-painter Desportes. Trained in the mysteries of his craft by his father, Oudry then went as assistant to DE SERRE, who was painting the king's galleries; and it was whilst engaged upon this work that he fell under the spell of Largillière, and begged the fashionable portrait-painter to take him as his pupil. Largillière had a great affection for the young fellow, and a sincere admiration for the gifts with which he was dowered. It was inevitable that Oudry should turn his ambition towards the making of the historical painting—he saw that wealth and honours came to such; but after many failures to create this style of subject, his good sense and his judgment revealed to him that it was not to be for him; that his career lay in the decorative art which concerned itself with the painting of animals; and he set all his powers to that end, coming to repute thereby, and honours at the Academy in which he won a distinguished career. He was early in great demand amongst the nobility and the wealthy.

THE GRAND MANNER

His style and his subjects were now so close akin to those of Desportes that it is not always an easy matter to separate their works. And it is to the eternal credit of Desportes that no slightest taint of jealousy was ever known between the two men. Both men, of serene and unjealous temper, lived in life-long friendship; and the wide demand for their work was large enough to keep both of them busy.

By the time that Oudry came to manhood the years of King Sun were well nigh at an end; but under Louis XV he rapidly rose in the royal favour, and was eventually made director of the tapestry looms at Beauvais. Oudry came to Beauvais to find the factory in a sorry state; and the achievement of the designers had sunk, under academic lack of originality, to the lowest ebb. Oudry's presence was at once felt. He set himself to the designing of tapestries in the spirit of the age, and was soon calling the greatest painters of the time to his assistance. The prestige of the looms soon arose to its former splendour; and he laid the foundations of greater achievement in the years after him. He transfused his own enthusiasm into the weavers, and gave the factory new life. His art was well fitted to tapestry, and came to a wide vogue. His *Fables of La Fontaine* are famous, and caught the taste of his day, and spread their fashion also to Aubosson. He prepared the way for Boucher. Oudry seems to have been a somewhat severe taskmaster. He trained the new generation of weavers; but he was later given the direction of the looms at the Gobelins, where he came foul of the workmen. He had insisted at Beauvais, and he now insisted at the Gobelins, that the design should be copied accurately, colour for colour, as painted by the artist; the weavers replied that in tapestry many of these colours were unstable, and they refused to use fugitive colours, confining themselves to such as those of which they held the secret. Oudry died in 1755 at the height of the long and acrimonious dispute; and it took all Boucher's genial powers to smoothe out the irritation of the weavers thereafter. With Oudry died the elaborate system of the art institutions of Louis XIV, created by

Colbert and Le Brun. The school had done its work; it was to give way to a fresher, less academic, more original art that was to be the glory of the seventeen-hundreds.

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH THE PAINTERS OF THE CHASE IN THE SPLENDID YEARS OF KING SUN

Before leaving the sixteen-hundreds, it were well to glance at the painters of the life of the people, though the subject was detested by King Sun, as he showed with his contemptuous "Ôtez-moi ces magots-la!" on being shown the work of Teniers.

JEAN ALEXIS GRIMOU (1678-1740), though a Swiss, was self-taught in art; and brought into France drinking-scenes in the Dutch and Flemish Style.

PIERRE SUBLEYRAS (1699-1749), though he also painted large Scriptural subjects in the dull manner, shows fine gifts in his small paintings of the life of the people, in which a rich colour-sense and values reveal him a man of high qualities. Spanish blood gave him a realism in marked contrast to his age. At the Louvre is a remarkable work by him, *The Falcon.*

Nor must we pass by a fine portrait-painter in JEAN RAOUX (1677-1734), because his religious subjects and mythologies are dull enough. The Louvre has several fine works, half portrait, half life of the people, of which his *Young Woman reading a Letter* is a good example. But, influenced by Watteau, he belongs rather to the seventeen-hundreds, as does JEAN FRANÇOIS DE TROY (1679-1752), who treated the more elegant life of the day amongst the upper classes.

It is usual to speak of the art of the grand century of Louis Quatorze as belonging to a more profound and stronger age than that of the seventeen-hundreds which we are about to survey. This is the most superficial thinking. The mock-heroic and the pompous always deceive the shallow of wit. There was much that was superficial and shallow in the coming age; but the seventeen-hundreds are always looked upon as breeding grace and charm only—as a matter of fact, they bred Washington and the giants of the French Revolution;

THE GRAND MANNER

and the two movements of the American War of Independence and the French Revolution are the most profound, the most world-compelling acts of modern times. The acts of the Italian Renaissance were mere superficial triviality compared with such momentous and prodigious acts. To see in the seventeen-hundreds only the *Fêtes Galantes*, is to leave the theatre at the end of the overture to the Reign of Terror. France was about to give forth a galaxy of great men such as the centuries can scarce rival; it is usual to scoff at France's failures after the Revolution, but it was France that had the daring to try the test of reality upon all the vague theories and noble talk that the rest of Europe had not the daring to essay. The courage of France is amongst the mightiest of the immortal attributes of the greatness of man. And it was all bred out of these seventeen-hundreds.

The art of France in the Grand Age, however, had this great consequence, that it created a national utterance—it prepared the way for a purely French achievement, that was to come out of the north in the haunting art of Watteau.

France came under the heel of King Sun; she lost awhile her reality in the failure of the Fronde, she fell thereby under the tyranny of antique ideas; but she was to blot out her sin in the Revolution, and at one stride to step into the front rank of the world. Louis Quatorze made it a part of the tyranny of his age to compel the art of France into academic subjection. The seventeen-hundreds were to strike the fetters from the art of France. Everything in King Sun's France was bent to the glorification of King Sun—art amongst the rest. This art, directed by Le Brun, uttered its stiff age in consummate fashion; by the time that 1700 struck it had exhausted itself and lay enervated and dying, just as France lay enervated and exhausted by the mock-heroic; indeed, by 1702 the treasury was near empty.

When 1700 struck, the sun of the Grand Monarque was about to set. King Sun was soon to be sinking in disasters blood-red, in a black night of bankruptcy that his long lease

of splendour had cast over the land. Across the English Channel a greater than he, stern Cromwell, had taught the world a lesson of democracy; and though the Fronde had failed to bring that lesson to triumphant issue in France, she had learnt the lesson, and her sterner spirits were brooding upon it.

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH THE PAINTERS OF THE CHASE IN THE SPLENDID YEARS OF KING SUN

King Sun's statecraft—so they called his manifold treacheries—was coming home to roost. Others had discovered how to cheat at cards, and were bettering the instruction. Then the old king's ears heard of English troopers riding down the flower of his mighty soldiery at Blenheim, then at Ramillies. Flanders fell from his divine right. Then came the disasters of Oudenarde, then of Lille and Ghent and Bruges, and threat upon his very frontiers. The terrible winter thereafter saw famine stalk the land. Eight years of taxation forestalled, and the nobility melting down their plate, only brought the overwhelming news of Malplaquet. Then his old good fortune shone awhile. Marlborough fell from power in his own land; and peace loomed. With peace came death into the old king's palace—first the Dauphin, then the Dauphin's son, the Duke of Bourgogne, who had become Dauphin in his stead, whose son the new Dauphin swiftly followed, leaving his sickly little brother Louis, Duke of Anjou, as Dauphin, to become soon King Louis xv over France.

The bigoted woman who ordered the old king's will sent him to that folly of the persecution of the Jansenists that split the nation in two, creating that passionate desire for liberty that was to destroy his royal house before the century was spent.

On the first day of the September of 1715, bitterly persecuting his people, the old king saw Death beckon him. In such darkness King Sun lay him down to die, with the courage and piety that had never been absent from him even in his vilest treacheries. It was a part of the heroic pose that was the breath of the age—and he kept the pose to the last. As the breath left his royal body, the herald of the Court crept to the

THE GRAND MANNER

window of the dead king's sickly great-grandson with a black plume in his hat, whispered low, "The King is dead!"—and reappearing immediately afterwards, white plume in hat, cried aloud: "Long live the King!" The five-year-old Louis XV was King of France.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

CHAPTER XII

WHEREIN PRINCE CHARMING STEPS INTO FRANCE THROUGH THE GATES OF THE NORTH

WHEREIN PRINCE CHARMING STEPS INTO FRANCE THROUGH THE GATES OF THE NORTH

A STRANGE significance was in the herald's saying on that first September day of 1715. The king was dead indeed; long live the king—and he was to live long, as Louis XV, and to rule over a strange France. The boy-king's brilliant but dissolute kinsman, Philip, Duke of Orléans, tearing up King Sun's will, seized power as Regent, appointing the infamous Abbé Dubois, his boon-companion in his debaucheries, as minister of France.

Across the land, from high and low, came a mighty sigh of relief; light airs fanned the faces of the people; the starch melted out of the stiff and demigoddish pose; all France, weary to scant tolerance of the pomposities of the sixteen-hundreds, flung off the solemnities and followed the Regent and his Abbé in the dance and riot. The gaiety of the nobles, thus suddenly beckoned back, like the belittled heir to a pedantic parent suddenly come into his patrimony, leaped the barriers of innocent delights. The nice conduct of the clouded cane, the calculated strut, the etiquette of the jewelled snuff-box, the elaborate bow and curtsey, took on a mincing graciousness and an affable charm. The furnishment of the houses was wrought to less rigid design. The subjects for the pictured arts made for the worship of the graces and of the winsome goddesses unhampered with excess of draperies. The gods, with a fluttering ribbon about them, joined the romp in pictured playfulness.

The Regent began well: flung open the doors of the Bastille; put a limit on *lettres de cachet*; encouraged the arts; reduced the army; tackled bankruptcy with a will, though he soon fell away to the tyrannies again. He changed high policy; became the ally of England, lost France her ancient

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

ally Spain. Then came the Scotsman Law to create the Royal Bank of France, and to exchange gold for paper; and France gave way to the vast gamble. Suddenly in 1719 came the crash.

In the February of 1723 the young King Louis XV was declared to be of man's estate, at thirteen—and before the year was out Orléans, fallen from power, and his precious Dubois, were both dead from their excesses.

The young king came to rule over a vastly changed France. Louis Quatorze had enriched, ennobled, and granted power to the great burgess class in his skilful scheme to check the encroachment of the ancient noblesse upon his sovereignty. The wild gamble for riches during the Regency, under the Scottish gambler Law, had made many rich almost in a night who had never dreamed of wealth—as many poor who had aforetime been greatly rich. The newly rich, without social position or ancestral splendour, vied with each other to come near to the fashions of the Court and to outshine in luxury the stately homes of the old nobility, many of whom were now greatly impoverished. A rage set in for daintily furnished rooms; elegance became a god. All well-to-do Paris clamoured for the furnishments of the best craftsmen. It was the harvest of the artists. The huge pretentious palaces of the rich under Louis XIV, costly to build and costly to maintain, gave way to more elegant and less expensive houses. The boudoir, created by the womenfolk as a cosy place of retirement from the huge rooms of the palatial houses in King Sun's day, became now the most important and charming room in the house. The exquisite thing usurped the gigantic thing—in decoration, in furniture, in pictures. The exquisite home came into France at last, and created one of the finest epochs in the whole history of the craft. The artist, free of the burden of State guidance, uttered himself; and his speech became pure French. We are wont to hear too much of the frivolity and vice of the age; we hear too little of the fact that everything that makes for the fascination of the home was created and initiated by the art of France and England in the seventeen-hundreds.

OF PAINTING

WHEREIN PRINCE CHARMING STEPS INTO FRANCE THROUGH THE GATES OF THE NORTH

In 1700 the painters of France were Noël Coypel, Antoine Coypel, the De Troys, De La Fosse, Largillière, Rigaud, Laguerre, Jouvenet, Parmentier, all working in the grand manner. Sculpture was at its best. Furniture and decoration were square, solid, heavy, clumsy.

Gillot was breaking with the pompous tradition when the Regent came to power; and his new style affected Audran. De La Fosse, of the Academicians, was tolerant and ready to recognise new endeavour—he was to prove a good friend to Watteau. And Watteau was to pass by the mock-heroic with sulky disdain, and utter his own age. His very painting of statuary was to be French nudes turned to stone. The antique gods pass into the twilight and depart.

The doors of the Salon that shut in the year 1704 shut for the last time upon the public display of the art of the years of the Grand Monarque. It was thirty-three years before those doors were opened again, and upon what a changed France! The Salon of 1737 was an artistic event for all France. Old Rigaud, near upon eighty, shuffling through the great rooms of the Louvre, might well blink, baffled at the distance travelled by French Art since the beginning of the century, as he held forth, we may be sure not without irony, to the younger Academicians concerning the last Salon of 1704, thirty-three years gone by. Blink indeed he might; for the Art he knew was vanished—he stood lost, stammering, bewildered in a new world. A new generation had been born, grown up, and was in possession. A new language was being uttered which he scarce understood. Taste was wholly changed. The grand manner, the severe mock-heroics of the France of Louis Quatorze were flown; and the Agreeable Elegance and the Pleasant Make-Believe of Louis Quinze reigned in their stead. The imposing reception-room had given place to the dainty boudoir. Light chatter, gay banter, quick wit, and the airy repartee had usurped the stilted splendours of a consequential age. France, fatigued with the strain of the eternal pose of the grand manner,

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

freely unbent and sought relaxation in an elaborate etiquette of joyousness and amusement. The making of love was more pleasant pastime than the making of war. Gallantry and gaiety became the supreme objects for which to live—for which to die.

The grand manner and mock-heroic splendour of Louis Quatorze had not exactly made for truth in art—its severities had been the splendid lie of a stately strut. Literature and the arts had echoed the splendour of the lie—therein lay their truth, that they did so utter it—and with such solemnity and pomp as to give the lie something of that majestic utterance which it had. The man of the world, the hero, the very rogues (and the one had more than a little of the other) had lived in a stiffly brocaded, heavily bewigged, and ponderous etiquette. Speech wore formal tinsel. A sigh was calculated as though gowned in broideries. An oath was a measured masterpiece. So the real blithe France had disguised herself in heavy stuffs—putting on the whalebone busks and hoops of a stilted dignity, posing demigoddishly in an atmosphere of the sublime. Europe, by consequence, vied in a make-believe majesty that became an artistic reality. Europe essayed to believe herself a gorgeous prig—and became one. Nay; did not France's ranked battalions, going into battle, almost quarrel with the enemy that he did not fire first, France saluting? It was all very wonderful.

Louis Quatorze, nicknamed "the Great," being gone, France threw off her stiff whalebone corsets of pomposity from her; breathed freely again; and in the intoxication of being able to smile gracefully and laugh without loss of dignity and be prettily blithe and gay again, came near to flinging most of the rest of her apparel from her, and walking naked. As it was, she showed more than a demure ankle. But at least she became human—if naughtily human. Born in the pompous cradle of the *grand siècle* of Louis Quatorze, the young bloods of Louis Quinze could not wholly rid themselves of the grand manner; but they put prigdom from them to the best of their will, and strutted down their picturesque century breathing an air

WHEREIN PRINCE CHARMING STEPS INTO FRANCE THROUGH THE GATES OF THE NORTH

of easy elegance, set up a dainty pagan goddess for their worship, and became amiable and gracious—with charm as their aim, and love of frail women as the constant pursuit of their inconstant minds. . . . At once the stage saw the scene-shifters put on a new drama; the poets stained their fingers with rose-coloured inks; verse got a-tripping to a livelier measure; prose was uttered to a lighter rhythm; painting and sculpture blossomed into blitheness; the bloods burst into jocund frivolous song; the house and its furnishments showed more cosy splendours and took on more gracious lines. France became a coquette, seeking only pretty flower-strewn ways to tread, and giving herself to dalliance—her patch-box and her powder-puff and her fan a serious part of her unseriousness—her manhood's aim now to be a pretty fellow. *Vive le joli!*

But—and mark this well!—there was another France, a serious France the while. The wits were writing, stern men giving their powers to state a real and mighty significance revealed to them out of the Fronde, announced like a trumpet-call from Cromwell's England, the rights of man, the heritage of Liberty.

The bloods gave themselves to charm and gaiety; but even the bloods were toying with the philosophies.

And with the hour came the man. Antoine Watteau created the art of the century—a purely French utterance.

CHAPTER XIII

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

WATTEAU

1684 – 1721

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

IT is a part of the cant of criticism to speak of Watteau as a "little master," as though art were great in the fact of the largeness of the canvas. Watteau was far from a little master. He was one of the greatest of all time. In his smallest canvases is a largeness such as you shall seek in vain amongst ninety out of an hundred huge efforts of most. No man—not the greatest of them all—set in his painted space with more subtle, compelling, and haunting power the emotions that the contemplation of life aroused in the wan sensitive being of Watteau. Nor has any artist, before or since, had a more wide-reaching influence upon the genius of his land. These are not the attributes of a "little master." Watteau created his age. A whole century of splendid artistic endeavour was deep-rooted in his genius. He changed the face of France. Yet Watteau had been born a Fleming, but that on the 28th of the February of 1677 the troops of King Sun made investment of the town of Valenciennes, and, less than a month thereafter, carried the defences by storm, winning Valenciennes into the realm of France. The creator of the French art of the seventeen-hundreds was born in 1684. But French though he was not by blood, it was in Paris that his art came to him; in France that he came into his goodly heritage, and thereby became "the most French of French painters." In Watteau the genius of painting stepped out of the Low Countries into France.

To the Flemish glazier, thatcher, and tiler, Jean Philippe Watteau and his wife, Michelle Lardenois, on the 10th of

PAINTING

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

October 1684, was born at Valenciennes, now some seven years a city of France, a son whom they christened JEAN ANTOINE WATTEAU. Finding the boy covering every piece of paper on which he could lay hands with drawings, the worthy parents, much against the father's will, in 1698 sent the fourteen-year-old lad as 'prentice to a painter of the city called Gérin, head of the Guild of St. Luke, a mediocre fellow but the best the place had—with whom the youth stayed until his master's death in 1701, Watteau's seventeenth year. At Valenciennes the youth would see the great triple altarpiece of *St. Stephen* by Rubens in the church of St. Amand. At Valenciennes also were works by Martin de Vos, by Van Dyck, by Crayer, and by Teniers.

The young fellow's first-known painting, the Tennant *La Vraie Gaieté* (1700), reveals that Teniers and Brouwer were his early gods, above all Teniers; but even here, whilst the peasants dance before the inn with swinging sign of jug, the brutish boorish type goes out, and the innate sense of comeliness is more than hinted at—there is Watteau's glitter of light upon the close-creased folds of the dresses.

Soon thereafter came the *Retour de Guingette* (1701), wherein the many groups of revellers lurch homeward at the closing of the tavern in Flemish fashion.

Gérin dying in 1701, to the young fellow's grief, Watteau had to suffer his father's sneers at his lack of money-making and his refusal to pay for further teaching. The eyes of the sensitive youth turned to Paris. Hurriedly finishing some single-figure subjects in Teniers's style, of which were the St. Petersburg *Savoyard with Marmot*, and the vanished *La Fileuse*, Watteau made for Paris on foot, almost penniless, the clothes he stood in for sole wardrobe.

Watteau was alone in Paris. Paris might be beautiful but she had no heart. The young fellow fell a prey to misery. Unknown to a soul, shy, awkward, sensitive, his little money gone, his hat at last sold to buy bread, he knew bitter penury. His fragile frame, through hunger and cold, began to be racked

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

with the fevers and cough that rapidly gained possession of him. He would seek chill shelter in the church of Notre-Dame. On the bridge near by were shops that sold crude pictures. In a starving state he found refuge in one of these picture-factories, kept by one Métayer, where works were turned out by the dozen, where for a week's drudgery he received his daily soup and three livres (half-a-crown) every seven-night. Here one fellow painted the skies, another the draperies, another the heads, and another touched up and finished the crudity. Watteau seems to have won to favour early, for he was soon turning out pictures by the dozen of *St. Nicolas* which were given wholly to him, and an old woman with spectacles by Gerard Dou, called *Liseuse*, a favourite picture, he copied by the score.

When Watteau entered Paris, the decorations of the Grand Opera had called to the city amongst other decorators one Spoede from Antwerp, who had won the *Grand Prix* at the Academy. Spoede and Watteau became friends. Spoede introduced Watteau to Claude Gillot.

In 1703 Watteau went to CLAUDE GILLOT (1673-1722), who became his master and friend. Gillot, trained under the style of Louis the Great's decorator BERAIN, whose designs were carried out amongst others by BOULE, had broken away into a new style of his own, in which the pomposities of Berain were rejected. It was Gillot who set flame to the genius of the young fellow, some eleven years younger than he. Gillot was to become, in 1715, the year that Louis XIV died, a member of the Academy. A decorator of marked originality and power, Gillot brought the fantastic characters of Italian and French comedy into his design, ousting the gods of antiquity. And it was from Gillot that to Watteau were revealed the Pierrot or Gilles, the Columbine or Margot, Cassandra, Pantaloon, and Harlequin or Mezzetin, and the rest of the stage figures of the Italian theatre that became so characteristic of his art, whom he had seen playing upon the green at Valenciennes when a boy, but who had been banished

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

from France. In 1697 King Sun had shut the doors of the theatres upon the Italian comedians, bundling them into the street and out of the land, in anger at an inferred sneer at his precious Maintenon; and the lad Watteau, then thirteen years old, did not see them strut the stage until he was thirty-two, for they were only recalled by the Regent in 1716. The vanished *Le Départ des Comédiens Italiens*, given to Watteau, was probably by Gillot, as are the Chantilly monkey-pictures that are given to Watteau. To Gillot, then, the young Watteau owed that atmosphere of the theatre, so marked in his art. But after five years the good friends quarrelled; and Watteau, with his strange silent brooding habit, kept his lips sealed as to the cause, though ever owning his heavy debt to Gillot, and praising his work. They parted; yet Gillot was a generous fellow, for, rarely as he went to the Academy, he attended to vote for Watteau. At Gillot's, as fellow-student to Watteau, was LANCRET, who became subject to him.

In 1708, on his breach with Gillot, Watteau, taking Lancret with him, went to CLAUDE AUDRAN, the Keeper of the Luxembourg, one of the first decorative artists of the day, whose grotesques were designed for the mansion of the Duchesse Bouillon, the château of La Muette, of Meudon, and Versailles. Thus the change of decorative style was initiated by Gillot and Audran; it was the genius of Watteau that raised it to its supreme utterance.

This style of figures in a realistic picture, in the midst of a decorative design of trees, foliage, birds, animals, and spacings employed in a pattern in which the details are themselves naturally painted, marked the transition from the formal ornamentation of the sixteen-hundreds to the markedly original French manner of the seventeen-hundreds. Watteau's schemes, published after his death by Julienne, and largely engraved by young Boucher, have come down to us in black-and-white. The famous *Dénicheur de Moineaux*, engraved by Boucher, is the typical example of this exquisite medley by Watteau; the *Berger content*, engraved by Crépy, and the *Le Buveur*, engraved

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

by Aveline, are others. Watteau's paintings of screens, harpsichords, and fans have vanished, but the engravers have kept the fan designs from utter loss, as Boucher, Jeaurat, and Aubert have preserved by their engravings his designs for the Chinese decorations of the Château de la Muette, in which the Chinese figures are obviously Frenchmen and Frenchwomen masquerading in Chinese dress, as Boucher's well-known *Nikou, femme bonze*, proves.

As pupil and assistant to Audran, Watteau is now said to have come under the glamour of Rubens and to have become a worshipper of his art.

Whilst with Audran he was snatching time to attend the Academy schools, and in 1709, at twenty-five, he competed with four others, GRISON, HUTIN, PARROCEL, and VERNANSAL, for the Grand Prix. Grison won it, and thereafter vanishes. Watteau took second prize. The young fellow brooded upon his defeat; blamed the subject, blamed his master Audran, blamed himself. He sulked alone; would stay away from Audran's studio, morose and melancholy. But he was secretly at work. The cold academic subject was not for Watteau. It was in the stately gardens of the old palace that the dreamy young fellow brooded upon the poetic atmosphere of the place; the glades and avenues filled his contemplative imagination with the haunting glamour of the trees; the architecture amidst the trees roused the secret melancholy of romance within him; the fountains murmured their faint refrain; the daintily arrayed men and women that stepped their theatric life over the grass formed harmonies for him and grouped and regrouped themselves as in a dreamland of the theatre. Here was his master or mistress—the France of his age. And he now painted his "first Watteau," his first French picture, the little *Départ de Troupe* (of which he began the etching, finished by Thomassin, known as *Recrue allant joindre le Régiment*). He showed it to Audran, who, alarmed at its high promise, lest he should lose his assistance, tried to discourage him. But Watteau had found himself. Making homesickness the excuse,

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

and deciding to drift quietly away from his kindly master Audran by a visit to his own people, Watteau took the painting to his friend, the Flemish Spoede, from whom he went to the art-dealer Sirois, who bought the work, and ordered a pendant. Watteau, with the small fee in his pocket, went home to Valenciennes, where he painted the *Halte d'Armée* (engraved by Cochin). Painted on copper, and still greyish in colour, they were much copied.

The young fellow had made of his native city an ideal, a dream—he came back to find the place dull.

Reaching Valenciennes on the 17th of September 1709, the day after the battle of Malplaquet, the chief note was of war. His *Halte* finished, Watteau painted the domestic pictures *La Diseuse d'Aventure* (the Fortune-teller), engraved by Cars; the *Le Jeu de Colin Maillard* (Blind Man's Buff), engraved by Rosin, in 1709-10, both vanished; and the *L'Occupation selon l'Age* in which his mother and friends appear. At Valenciennes was a wood-carver, one Pater, whose son, JEAN BAPTISTE JOSEPH PATER, became pupil to Watteau. At Valenciennes Watteau made several sketches of camp-life which he afterwards wrought into pictures; for the restless, brooding man tarried but a year in his native town, and in 1710 was again on his way to Paris. In Paris he lodged in the house of his friend Sirois, where he met Gersaint, who married one of that picture-dealer's daughters. The early military series were probably completed in Paris. The *Escorte a'Equipages*, engraved by Le Cars, has vanished; Scotin engraved a little *Fatigues de la Guerre*, Crépy a *Délassements de la Guerre*—the little pieces are said to be at the Hermitage. His minute, realistic touch rapidly develops that pictorial sense and exquisite style that were to mark his genius. Impressionism rapidly increases. But the greyness of the harmonies remains.

Cochin engraved a more colourful *Retour de Campagne*, and breadth of style appears in the *Halte* and *Défilé*, engraved by Moyreau. The small James *Encampment* is of this time. The Hermitage has his *Bivouac*.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

This early phase of the small military series shows Watteau avoiding the tragedy and horrors of war. He has nothing of Callot in him. As markedly he avoids its stately pomp ; he is concerned with its picturesque glitter, its liveliness, its elegancies. For him only the romance. Only in *La Revanche des Paysans* and *Pillement d'un Village par l'Ennemi*, both engraved by Baron, does he touch tragedy. But already his brooding spirit utters amidst the smiling sunlight of his themes that pensive melancholy note that haunts his art. Watteau seems now to have come into considerable vogue ; he begins to attract the attention of the great collectors.

In 1712 Watteau met the rich financier Crozat, and soon had the run of that great collection of the Old Masters gathered by this enthusiast. Under this influence he rapidly developed. For Crozat's dining-room he painted the four large ovals of the *Seasons*, of which the engravings by Desplaces, Du Bos, Fessard, and Audran remain to us, and the two De Goncourt drawings of *Spring* and *Autumn*. Watteau was now in the world of fashion, meeting on intimate terms some of the greatest wits and artists of the day. He met and became the friend of Largillière and Nattier, De Troy and Rigaud, Le Moine and Coypel. Thither also went Lancret ; and there also he was to meet De Julienne, the rich amateur, who was soon one of his closest friends, and to whom we owe the preservation of many of his works through the engravings he caused to be made after the artist's death. For him he painted the vanished *Les Jaloux* engraved by Scotin, which is said to have been one of two works sent to the Academy by Watteau to represent him for his election, but painted much later—the two works were probably the military pieces that he had painted for Sirois. Here also he met the gossip of the artists of France, Mariette, who tells of Watteau's gloomy ways, and that he could not suffer a joke except when made by himself—which was rare.

In 1712, his twenty-eighth year, Watteau decided to seek admission to the Royal Academy—it was the only door to wide recognition and promotion. It is said that he sent two

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

pictures to try and gain a *Pension du Roi* so that he might go to Italy to study his beloved Venetians; but that DE LA FOSSE (1636-1716), the brilliant pupil of Le Brun and a man of wide taste, persuaded him instead to seek entrance to the Academy.

On the 30th of July the Academy, having looked at his works, accepted him. The subject of his "piece of reception" was left to his own choice.

Watteau seems soon thereafter to have become a guest of Crozat in his great mansion in the Rue de Richelieu. Here the great dead of Flanders and Venice drew his homage. Here, like Rubens, the Venetians rid his art of all coldness, and the glow of rich colour came to him. Here, too, he developed his great gift of subtle draughtsmanship, evolving that sensitive, nervous, tender touch so characteristic of him. His schooling brought his art vast riches; it brought him also defects—his northern vision loses some grip of character in aiming at type. But his sense of form and modelling increased, as did his capacity to render textures, and to catch the allure of youth—whether in man or maid.

Unfortunately Watteau rarely signed his work.

It was in these Crozat years that he blossomed into his happiest vein. He loved music, and the guitar and flute seem to have attracted him; indeed, in his portrait of *Himself* in the Spencer Collection, it is not as artist that he limns himself but —playing a barrel-organ! It was at Crozat's that he met his biographer, the pompous Comte de Caylus, son to Maintenon's beautiful cousin, the Marquise de Caylus. Caylus was soon his devoted admirer and friend, and became his amateur pupil, etching many of his works. Caylus also had his circle, which so bitterly hated Voltaire, and were hated by him. Watteau showed his alliance against Voltaire by caricaturing him as Pantaloons, the Doctor of the Italian Comedy. So Watteau, courted and admired, walked awhile, if with gloom, through the routs and masked balls, concerts and picnics and fêtes, in the splendid rooms and great gardens of the rich.

How long Watteau stayed with Crozat is unknown.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

Caylus, sent on foreign service in 1713, came back to Paris in 1717. Crozat in 1714 went to Italy awhile, and on his return Watteau was in the Rue de Richelieu. He was painting *Fêtes Champêtres*, *Fêtes Vénitiennes*, *Réunions*, *Repas*, *Collations*, *Concerts*, *Conversations* at fever heat, which were as feverishly bought. It were as though he were compelling man's three-score-and-ten allotted years into the short lease of life that he saw to be his doom. A series of vistas through trees with amorous groups, *Les Agréments de l'Eté* and *Les Agréments de la Campagne*, were given forth; and marriage-feasts, *Les Noces* and *L'Accordée de Village*. At Madrid are the *Les Jardins de St. Cloud* and *Les Noces*, dated 1714, painted for Elizabeth Farnese. The Soane Museum in London has a somewhat perished *Les Noces*; Potsdam has *La Mariée de Village*. He had this habit of series—a flight of poems on a theme. St. Petersburg has a *Minuet*; Edinburgh a fine *Plunderer of the Sparrow's Nest*.

At Crozat's, too, he painted in the mythologic vein the rich Louvre painting of the female nude in *Jupiter et Antiope*, and the Louvre *Le Jugement de Paris*. The *Vertumne et Pomone* is likely enough of earlier date, and was long a signboard on the Pont Notre Dame, rescued therefrom by the faithful Julienne. *Diane au Bain* (engraved by Aveline) and *Vénus désarmée* at Chantilly were later in these years, and Boucher engraved the *Europa*. The Wallace has a *Toilet*, also dealing with the nude in graceful fashion.

Whether he painted all these at Crozat's is unknown; but the restless, brooding man now wearied of gaiety and the splendours as he had wearied of poverty, wearied of Valenciennes, wearied of his benefactors and masters. He quarrelled and sulked with his friends; petulant of mood, filled with discontent of himself and his work, he left the luxury of the great mansion of Crozat and took lodgings of modest degree with Sirois in 1714, hiding himself there under seal of secrecy, refusing all invitations, and becoming a prey to melancholy. He was suddenly seized with a desire to go to Italy: but he had spent all his savings.

At Sirois's he met Gersaint, son-in-law to Sirois, whose pen

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

has left us a picture of the man. Of middle height and delicate constitution, his character restless and changeable, strong of will, unburdened by moral scruple yet virtuous of life, Watteau was impatient, timid, cold, and embarrassed in conversation, and by habit discreet and reserved to strangers—he was a good though difficult friend. Something of a misanthrope, and a bitter and merciless critic, always discontented with himself and others, he was unforgiving of temper. He spoke little, but read much in his leisure time, his only amusement.

Jean Baptiste Pater, born in 1695, was fourteen when Watteau went to Valenciennes in 1709, nearly fifteen when he left. Whether he went to Paris with his master is not known, but is likely enough. Pater is even said to have been apprenticed to Watteau whilst he was still at Gillot's, in Pater's eleventh year, which seems unlikely enough. If so, and the boy, with Lancret, followed Watteau to Audran's studio in 1708, he would even then only be thirteen. In any case, Watteau seems early to have resented the worshipful pupilage of Lancret and of Pater—to have resented their too close imitation of his style, and to have sent them packing. Lancret had shown at the Fête-Dieu, in the Place Dauphin, a couple of works so like the art of Watteau that a breach had occurred that was never healed. But Gersaint knew young Pater well, and admired the lad's dignity, and sympathised with him under the ill-nature of his master, when, galled by Watteau's ill-natured severity, the young fellow at last left him.

Unstable, restless, Watteau seems to have been unable to settle in any place for long. He was no sooner settled in his lodgings than he grew weary of them, and flitted again and again, making some elaborate excuse. Caylus tells that Watteau was most at ease in sundry rooms that he engaged for him, and in which Caylus and Hénin sat at his feet as disciples, where no one could disturb the vexed spirit and moods of the afflicted man; here, says Caylus, he shed his atrabilious, timid, and caustic character as society knew him, and showed all his agreeable, tender, and idyllic self.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

Boucher has left us his etching after the drawing by Watteau of himself, made for Julienne, which probably shows the artist as he was about 1714. Tardieu engraved a vanished portrait of *Watteau painting, with Julienne playing the 'cello, in a leafy landscape.*

Meanwhile he was painting the Wallace *Champs Elysées*, in which the statue is founded on his sleeping nude in the *Jupiter et Antiope*; the Louvre *Assembly in a Park*; the famous Dulwich *Ball under a Colonnade* (*Plaisirs du Bal*).

From Sirois the restless man seems to have gone to his brother-Academician NICOLAS VLEUGELS about 1715. He had met the Marquise de Parabère, a beautiful brunette and a reigning beauty of the Court, at whose feet the king was to sit. Watteau painted her, and for her, much—the panels of her carriage, her fan, and the like; and the Marquise in 1715 introduced him to the Regent. The Regent's daughter, the Duchesse de Berry, bought in 1716 the Château de la Muette; and for her Watteau decorated it in the Chinese fashion.

Watteau is said to have founded his *fêtes galantes* on Rubens's *Jardin d'Amour*, which is as it may be; but the baroque architecture and glamour of trees had impressed his eyes at the Luxembourg with all their romance. 'Tis true that Rubens's lovers are seen with flights of attendant Cupids, that steal amongst the skirts of the beauties, but how exquisitely poetic and haunting are Watteau's dreams! You shall look for it all in vain elsewhere. Watteau undoubtedly copied details in drawing and in painting from Rubens's *Kermesse*, with its frank and brutish realism; and 'tis likely enough that a group therein suggested his vanished *La Surprise*, engraved by Audran, painted for his friend Hénin, yet it is the only known example of any picture by him founded upon the works of other men. For *L'Amour désarmé*, engraved by Audran, Veronese is claimed as stepfather. Indeed, Venice helped to lead him to his full achievement. His admiration for Titian's landscape, for Campagnola, and for Bassano was profound; for Veronese as marked. We know that Watteau, a keen critic, fretted at his

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

paintings, and preferred always his own drawings; but it was a part of his eternal disquietude and brooding discontent. That Titian drew his homage we see in the Louvre *Jupiter et Antiope*, that exquisite rendering of the female nude so French and delicate in utterance. To the handling of paint, to the design, even to the crinkled sharp folds of the sleeves, of Paolo Veronese, Watteau's debt was as heavy as to any man, as you may see in the Dulwich *Plaisirs du Bal*, the Wallace *Music Party* (*Les Charmes de la Vie*), and the Berlin *L'Amour au Théâtre Français*. But one suspects that it was the *Concert Champêtre* of Giorgione that fulfilled his art more than any painting.

Watteau is to France what Giorgione is to Venice, the creator of its pure utterance. Both were to die young; both were richly gifted in colour sense; both broke with the past, and brought into their art a new and exquisite utterance attune to the poetic spirit of the race. Both found the field for their art in the lyrical realm of the *fête champêtre*. In the superb Potsdam *L'Amour Paisible*, one of his supreme masterpieces (engraved by De Favannes), Watteau sings the haunting sweet-sad song of France with the consummate and indefinable power that haunts Giorgione's poetic and lyrical art in the *Concert Champêtre*, wherein the tender melancholy of Venice is breathed like a sigh. They both gave the idyll to their peoples. Their kinship with Giorgione is seen in the so-called *Le Lorgneur* and *La Lorgneuse*, engraved by Scotin, and the *Tête-à-tête*, engraved by Audran. In *L'Amour Paisible* Watteau discovers his age in an art that is unrivalled. Here France discovers herself, and the century bursts into song. The sense of music is thrilling as song of nightingale. Here he gives utterance in astounding wise to that pensive brooding upon the wonder of the earth, aloof yet intimate, that renders a mood of Nature held by the spirit of twilight in which the coarse realities of the world melt into a beautiful dream, haunted by the sadness of the passing of it all, its ephemeral charm, that the rude day will wreck and destroy. All passion is lulled in a calm of infinite silence in which the heart-beat seems almost a violence, yet the

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

air is held by the tenseness as of passion suppressed but unquenchable. The joy of the moment is enwrapt in tense melancholy; regret hangs upon the skirts of fleeting pleasure; the real world melts into a twilit vision, unreal as dreamland. Pathos and charm, a sob and a love-sigh, are sung low, as to soft music by viol and lute, and possess our senses in a haunting sweet-sadness. A weary France, fatigued with pompous splendour, sighs to be loved, and to love something she cannot define.

These Feasts of Love, such as the Dresden *Divertissement champêtre* (or Love Feast), the vanished *Bon Voyage* engraved by Audran, the *L'isle enchantée* (engraved by Le Bas), all utter this haunting note; and probably are of about the same time in Watteau's creative force. But he was about to give forth his masterpiece in this realm. He passes from the pastoral mood to the *fêtes galantes* in the poetic Chantilly *Le Plaisir Pastoral* (or *Amusements champêtres*), engraved by Tardieu, in which he sounds in full the exquisite lyric art that was to be his in full measure, haunting and melodious. The Wallace *Fountain* utters this poetic intensity with wizardry and power. There is music in the Uffizi *Flute Player* who entertains the beauties seated before a trellised arbour; Judge Evans has an exquisite work of the same year, *L'Escarpolette* ("The Swing"); the Madrid *St. Cloud* echoes it; the Dresden *Fête champêtre* pronounces it; the superb *L'Amour Paisible* utters it in full orchestration. Even the *Faux Pas* at the Louvre contains it. The small Harland-Peck study for the great *L'Amour Paisible* is fortunately in London.

When Watteau had been accepted by the Academy in 1712 Barrois and Coypel had been appointed to see Watteau paint his *pièce de reception*; but Watteau had made no slightest effort to paint it, though the subject had been left wholly to his choice. He was bound to paint it throughout at the Louvre under the eyes of the inspectors. The Academy, on the 5th of January 1714, had asked for explanations; repeated the demand in 1715; in the January of 1716 again granting another delay; but in the January of 1717 they lost patience, and gave him a

VII

WATTEAU
1684 – 1721

"THE FOUNTAIN"

(WALLACE COLLECTION)

One of his smaller pictures, 17⅓ in. high by 13¾ in. wide, called also "La Cascade."

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

month only from that date. Watteau realised that he must carry out his bond, went to the Louvre, and in seven days dashed off the immortal *Embarquement pour Cythère*, his great *fête galante*, a great sketch rather than a finished work, and thereby perhaps holding more exquisitely and uttering more fitly the poetic genius of the man and of his age. At its August sitting in 1717 the Academy accepted it, entering it in the minutes as a *feste galante*, and declaring Watteau a member of its body. Those minutes were enthusiastically signed by a very full number of the greatest members, and Gillot signed with them. For Julienne he painted the subject again, with differences, in more elaborate and finished fashion—that masterpiece now at Berlin, engraved by Tardieu. Watteau wrought in these two works the most exquisite painted poetry known to us —he stepped thereby among the supreme artists of all time. King Sun was dead these two years ; and France, languid, weary of glory, was yearning for she knew not what. Watteau was the fit interpreter of the age. His art utters the yearning for a voyage to the isles of bliss, his sweet-sad melancholy breathes desire for lands beyond the seas where happiness shall have no regrets ; there is a sigh even as the blithe lovers troop to the embarkation, as though loath to leave the beautiful land, as though not wholly certain that the Beyond, too, may not have its regrets. France sings freely at the death of King Sun and the end of the reign of the bigoted and virulent prude, Maintenon ; but there is a sob in the song.

In 1716, the Italian comedians, banished from France in 1697 by indignant King Sun, were called back to Paris by the Regent, and were welcomed in June by all. Watteau caught the vogue, and gave forth a series in which Pierrot and Columbine and Harlequin and Pantaloons skip on to his canvases. He painted Sirois and his family in *Sous un Habit de Mezzetin* (engraved by Thomassin); the Louvre has his famous large figure of *Gilles*. Watteau frequented the Comédie italienne. Its strange haunting art beckoned him to the immortal farce. *Gilles* and a portrait of *Julienne* are Watteau's

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

life-size efforts. For Julienne he painted *Les Jaloux* ; and the Wallace has his small *Gilles and his Family* ; and Gilles appears again in the famous Berlin *Comédiens italiens* engraved by Baron. St. Petersburg has the fine little *Comédie italienne* engraved by Thomassin ; the Hermitage the *Mezzetin jouant de la Guitare* engraved by Audran ; the Wallace the glorious if somewhat perished *Columbine and Harlequin*, known to the French as *Voulez-vous triompher des Belles*, engraved by Thomassin ; there are the Rothschild *La Sérénade italienne* and the little Northbrook *Pierrot and Harlequin* (or the Masquerade), engraved by Surugere as "Arlequin, Pierrot et Scapin."

The theatre, French and Italian, was now a phase of Watteau's art ; and he painted the Berlin *L'Amour au Théâtre français* as pendant to *L'Amour au Théâtre italien*, both engraved by Cochin. But the French stage gave him the two exquisite and superbly painted single figures at the Louvre which are of his highest achievement, *L'Indifférent* (The Indifferent Swain) and *La Finette* (The Shy Maiden). Chantilly has the dainty *L'Amante inquiète*, and at Chantilly is *The Guitar-player*, who appears again in the Buckingham Palace *La Surprise* and the Dresden *Fête champêtre* (or *Fête galante*). At Potsdam is his well-known *The Dance* (or *Iris, c'est de bonne heure*); at the Wallace the glowing sunny *Music Lesson*, where also is the stately, superb masterpiece of *The Concert* (or *Les Charmes de la Vie*), which has its dark variant at Berlin, two of Watteau's greatest works, in which, by his consummate tact and poetic vision, he yields into our senses the stately cadence of the music of the age wherein the measure is of the gavotte and minuet, and the air is filled with the notes of flute and lute and violins. Liotard engraved the *Comédiens français* at Berlin.

In 1718 Watteau was made Painter to the King.

Whether Watteau went to Vleugels in 1715 or 1718, with him Watteau was in the September of 1719, since Vleugels writing to Carriera Rosalba states that Watteau is living with him and desires to exchange a picture with her.

Unable to enjoy prosperity on earth, without hope in a

VIII

WATTEAU

1684 – 1721

"L'INDIFFÉRENT"

(Louvre)

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

future, the plagued soul of Watteau could not find rest. His disease daily grew upon him. The pompous Caylus appealed to him to think of his future career. Watteau grimly answers: "Is there not the hospital? They refuse no one there." Julienne watched over him with rare affection and care, as did Gersaint, his faithful friend.

In 1719 Watteau took his restless way to London at the year's ending. Here he had soon to call in Dr. Mead. Watteau's work was eagerly sought after; but the miserable man knew no English, and the coal-smoke of London brought him added suffering. His affairs were in a wretched state. Yet he was well received, and did well. Whether he took some of his works to sell or painted in London is unknown. Dr. Mead bought the *Comédiens italiens* and the later work called *Amour Paisible*—the one engraved by Baron—which show little English design. The four Buckingham Palace works given to Watteau are said to have been painted in England, but both facts are challenged—two *Fêtes champêtres*, a *Harlequin and Pierrot with ten Figures*, and *M. Pourceaugnac pursued by his Women and Children*; they happen to be by Pater. Whilst in London, Watteau met Mercier, who painted the Louvre *L'Escamoteur*, there given to Watteau. Pound engraved a caricature by Watteau of a French quack called *Dr. Misaubin*.

As a matter of fact, Watteau must have spent what he made in England, which could not have been much, since he was back again in Paris by the 21st of August in 1720, being presented there to Carriera Rosalba, the famous pastellist, who was staying with Crozat. In the February of 1721 she sat to Watteau for the vanished portrait of *Rosalba Carriera*, engraved by Liotard.

However, Watteau on his return to Paris went to live with his faithful friend Gersaint, who was now a picture-dealer. He asked Gersaint to let him paint him a signboard for his shop "to take the stiffness out of his fingers"; and the famous *Enseigne de Gersaint*, engraved by Aveline, was the fine result—a

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

superb picture of the life of the time. Painted in eight days, Watteau being only able to work in the mornings owing to his increasing malady, it was afterwards cut in two by some vandal, the two halves being picked up by the agents of Frederick the Great. It is one of the treasures of Berlin; its silvery key an eternal tribute to the genius of Watteau, its breadth of treatment unsurpassed even by his wizard brush.

Of this time are the Dresden *Fête d'Amour*; the Wernher *Gamut of Love*; the Berlin *Assembly in a Park*; the Edinburgh *Fêtes Vénitiennes*; the Potsdam *La Leçon d'Amour*; the Wallace *Amusements champêtres*; the Berlin *La Collation*; the Dulwich *Repast in a Wood*, and as proved by Watteau's letter to Julienne, the large Wallace *Rendez-vous de Chasse* (September 1720), with its Wallace pendant *The Garden Party*. The *Holy Family* engraved by Du Bos is of this year.

After some six months with Gersaint, the afflicted Watteau, early in 1721, dreading to become a burden upon his friend, sought other lodgings. Here Julienne sends him books. He suffers now so badly that he cannot sleep. He cannot create any longer. He draws a little. He becomes worse. He thinks he will breathe better in the country. The Abbé Haranger, canon to Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, gives him a room in his house at Nogent, by Vincennes, whither Gersaint takes him, going to him every two or three days. Watteau is fast wasting away. Looking back on his past, he calls his dismissed townsman Pater to him, owns to Gersaint that he had feared him as rival, and gives his remaining life to teaching him. It was to be but for a month.

He painted for the curé of Nogent a *Christ on the Cross surrounded by Angels*, now vanished. Even as he lay dying his old restlessness stung him again to change his lodging. He hungered for his native air. Selling his belongings, he begged to be taken home as soon as he was well enough; but he sank, and on the 18th of July 1721 he suddenly passed away in the arms of his friend Gersaint.

So died the stricken, melancholy, brooding man, in his

IX

WATTEAU

1684 – 1721

"FÊTE CHAMPÊTRE"

(National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh)

thirty-seventh year, finding in eternal sleep a cessation from that hunger that nothing would satisfy.

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

Julienne raised an immortal memorial to him in publishing a collection of his engraved works.

In the handling of Watteau's paint there is an unmistakable touch which persists from first to last, and is his sign manual. He models his forms with the point of a juicy brush with great delicacy, that gives to all his work a translucency much like the handling of Gainsborough.

In the frigid and calculated art of the pseudo-classic frost that fell upon painting with the Revolution, Watteau's fame went down with the rest of the genius of the seventeen-hundreds. But the light and aerial truths, the glow of living, pulsing colour lived on. David's pupils threw bread pellets at the *Embarkation for Cytherea*, and flung their contempt upon it. But Watteau lives on; and David and his students—where are they? Watteau stands now amongst the greatest masters of all time.

Constable, no easy man to please in landscape, said of the *Ball under a Colonnade*, "Be satisfied if you but touch the hem of Watteau's garment, for this inscrutable and exquisite thing would vulgarise even Rubens and Paul Veronese."

The genius of Watteau, rebuffed and made sterile by the academics, flaunted them, and broke their ordering. The academics patronised him, and proceeded to misunderstand him. Employing a juicy brush, his paint is flowing and fluid. Rarely cleaning his palette, sluggish in his habits, he gave his whole industry to creation.

A stupendous worker, his whole soul and pleasure and toil given to work, his short lease of life produced an enormous achievement. He wove his dreams with colours wrought like gems, in a swift art that rouses a haunting poetry as of the world at twilight, sweetly sad, wherein the whole fabric of life vanishes into the gloaming. Censorious men have praised the great Italians to Watteau's disparagement when he painted nudes; but who of them all caught the allure of women as did

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

Watteau? They called this man "frivolous," he who haunts the memory with lyrics of sweet melancholy in such tense compelling poetry such as no painter ever rivalled! Claude had brought the sunlight into the mock-heroic landscape of the sixteen-hundreds, and rendered the twilight of the passing of Italy. Watteau rid France of her remaining pretentiousness, and gave forth with intimate touch the new heart of France. He it was who, first in all France, realised that art is impressionism not imitation; he it was who found that colour should be employed to give the rhythmic essence of an impression like the notes of music. His unhappy moody being suffered for it, that his genius might sing the subtle moods of France. He came out of French Flanders to give back her true vision to France, then under the spectacles of Italy. He takes us amongst the bosky groves, in a perpetual twilight, or an hour before the twilight conquers the world and turns it to faëry; the fountains make concord to the faint sounds of viol and lute and mandolin, and the sigh of lovers in the desire for they know not what—hesitant to fulfil desire lest it should leave them desolate and sated—and, a lover of lovers, Watteau gave himself wholly and utterly, loverlike, to his mistress Art; wore himself out in the creation of it. His revelation of art to the ages is prodigious. He found that passion is the bedrock of all art. In the presence of his art our senses become attune to the romance of life, and our phrases take on the adornment of his lyricism; unwittingly our sentences and our words take the rhythm and colour of his song.

Watteau stands amidst the great ones, the peer of Titian and Veronese, of Giorgione and Rembrandt, of Rubens and Velazquez and Frans Hals.

He who would reach to communion with Watteau through any "book o' the words," whether by the De Goncourts, or Pater, or Verlaine, or Maudair, will never know the fulness of his utterance. We must go to his art, surrender ourselves to it, and then, and then only, shall we become partakers of its wizardry.

OF PAINTING

WHEREIN A WEAVER OF SWEET-SAD DREAMS DISCOVERS FRANCE TO FRANCE

He lived discontented, seeking rest and finding none; his brooding eyes set ever towards the world beyond the distant hills—the kingdom in which he was not. There, he feels certain, is a land of happiness, of gentle, balmy breezes; out beyond the twilit horizon is El Dorado. So life beckoned him from place to place. But he could not find amongst the Flemish peasants, amongst the brilliant world of Paris or of London, in the country or the town, the blithe content for which he craved. He took passage in the gaily beribboned ship for the blessed isle of Cytherea, the little love-gods fluttering about him; but had not the certainty of heart to set foot aboard the vessel and to dare the splendid adventure, lest he should find Boredom there as here. He dallies with love, Venus is his goddess—he shrinks from loving her, lest in her arms also he shall discover that love also is a delusion except in the anticipation. So in his art he uttered the melancholy of his soul, gaily beribboned and gracefully arrayed. He hungered for he knew not what; and he masked the ache in wit. Watteau is his age, uttered in consummate fashion—his art so fragile delicate, that it is like a lover's sigh at twilight wafted on the dulcet notes of viols—a lyric of yearning sung to the thrumming of mandolins. He bathes the senses in vast aerial distances redolent of the vague yearning for delights which tormented his unsatisfied soul.

CHAPTER XIV

WHEREIN WE SEE THE GAIETY OF THE TROUBLED SOUL OF WATTEAU DESCEND UPON THE PAINTERS OF FRANCE

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

WATTEAU drew the eyes of his age to the living spirit of that age; and from him poured forth the stream of art that uttered the seventeen-hundreds in France until near the close of its ending. But criticism and the superficial historian are wont to see only the "frivolous" side of that age, fixing their spectacles on dynasties and the great ones. Watteau brought art from the pompous make-believe of the mock-heroic sixteen-hundreds to the life of the French aristocrats; in the doing he was the source of that stream that flowed through France, uttering the life of the people, high and low—the high through De Troy and Van Loo and Coypel and Boucher and Fragonard; the low through Chardin and Fragonard and Greuze. These masters of the age were born out of Watteau, as their age was born out of the age of Watteau. In England, Gainsborough's whole style and his treatment of foliage in his landscapes reveal the strong influence of Watteau.

But before we glance at the greater ones who owed tribute to him, let us survey the art of his pupils.

LANCRET
1690–1743

NICOLAS LANCRET was born in Paris on the 22nd of January 1690, of humble parentage, the father being a coachman. The youngest of three sons, Nicolas Lancret at six years of age, on his father's death, went to his brother, an engraver, who taught the lad the mysteries. By fifteen he was painting, and went into the studio of PIERRE D'ULIN, a professor of the Academy. The devilries of the students brought about the expulsion in 1708 of the ringleaders, of whom were Lemoyne, Roettiers, and

Lancret. At eighteen the young fellow left the academic atmosphere for the more congenial studentship to Gillot, with whom he remained several years. At Gillot's Lancret came under the thrall of Watteau, and became an imitator; leaving Gillot he attached himself to his idol; but the warm friendship was torn in twain by Watteau's dread of a rival. Watteau's ill-nature drove the young fellow out of his life, on seeing a couple of Lancret's works being mistaken for his own, with his sneer that Lancret was "the most perfect of his apes."

WHEREIN WE SEE THE GAIETY OF THE TROUBLED SOUL OF WATTEAU DESCEND UPON THE PAINTERS OF FRANCE

Lancret, deeply grieved, tried to win back the goodwill of the master he adored, but to no purpose. Crozat, feeling for the young fellow, sent him to Montmorency to "copy Nature," and Lancret, wisely taking the good advice, spent his summers in the country round about.

His first pair of paintings, *Le Bal Champêtre* and *Une danse dans un Bosquet*, painted in 1714, marked a personal vision if still steeped in Watteau. A careful and laborious worker, his sole recreation was at the opera and theatre, which he loved; his friendship with the actresses, dancers, and singers brought the famous Camargo, Mollinet, Sallée, and Grandval into his life. The Camargo (Marianne de Cuppi de Camargo), the dancer, was the idol of Paris, her beauty the talk of the town, and she was painted again and again by Lancret, by Pater, and by Van Loo. Nantes possesses Lancret's portrait of her; the Wallace *La Camargo Dansant.*

Received into the Academy on the 24th of the March of 1719, two years after Watteau, as a "Painter of Fêtes Galantes," he painted as one of his "pictures of reception" his fine Wallace *Une Conversation Galante.* Lancret's whole life was passed in Paris, and his lodgings were ever near the Louvre.

An attractive fellow, tall and handsome, with well-bred manners, the affable Lancret, by his amiable and good address, entered the houses of the great, and won the affection and goodwill of all by his gentle, kindly ways. An upright man, he glittered exactly in the very qualities that Watteau lacked; and the world of fashion sought his company.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

For the first equerry to the king, the Marquis de Beringhen, he painted the *Four Seasons* in his mansion, which brought him wide notice.

Lancret, in 1731, was forty-one, when the king bought a house at the corner of the Place Vendôme and the Rue de la Paix, which Lancret decorated with twelve panels, one of which was *La Balançoire.* He was now at the height of his powers—others were *La Femme au Parasol, L'Oiseau, Le Joueur de Cornemuse,* and *Le Sommeil de la Bergère.* Presented to the king, he was called to the decoration of the salle à manger at Versailles, and painted there *Une Collation dans un Jardin*; for the Salon d'Apollon thereat four panels of *Fêtes Galantes*; and for the vestibule the *Chasse aux Léopards.*

Lancret was now in wide repute. Watteau was fourteen years in his grave when Lancret, in 1735, was promoted Councillor at the Academy.

De la Faye, a rich patron of the arts, was employing him; and the collectors were in hot rivalry for his works. Lancret, unspoiled by success, remained a student of his art to the end.

In 1740, at fifty, he married the pretty and accomplished Marie Boursault, a happy union that was to be all too short. Lancret's health began to suffer from the ravages of his incessant toil, but his last days knew the brightness and care of a wife's devotion. At fifty-three, on the 14th of the September of 1743, the "Art-child of Watteau" passed away.

Though his art lacked the lyric intensity and aerial poetry of his master, Lancret's work is at times very difficult to separate from that of Watteau. He painted movement; Watteau painted repose. Silvery, pearly, his truthful vision saw much of the spirit of his age. The Wallace has his *Revels* and *Une Fête dans un Bois*; Stockholm possesses his *Blind Man's Buff* and one of his favourite subjects, *L'Escarpolette* (The Swing); the Wantage Collection his *Cup of Tea*; Chantilly his famous *Le Déjeuner au Jambon*; Berlin his superb *L'Oiseleur* (Bird-catcher). The Briscoe *Le Menuet* is another well-known work. The spirit of Watteau is over all; Lancret even uses his

X

LANCRET

1690 - 1743

"CONVERSATION"

(Louvre)

subjects. Potsdam and Berlin are very rich in him—Berlin has the fine *Pastoral*, so-called, though it is clearly a Dance; Potsdam, amongst its wealth, the *Peep-show* (*La Lanterne-magique*) *at the Fair*, his last work. Generous to younger men, a fine critic of art, Lancret brought into the style created by Watteau a quality all his own.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE GAIETY OF THE TROUBLED SOUL OF WATTEAU DESCEND UPON THE PAINTERS OF FRANCE

PATER
1695–1736

Watteau's pupil, JEAN BAPTISTE JOSEPH PATER, was of weaker stuff than Lancret. Born at Valenciennes on the 29th of December 1695, the eldest of the four children of a wood-carver there, friend to the Watteaus, and trained under Gérin, he became thereafter pupil to Watteau. Watteau taught him as he taught Lancret, with enthusiasm; then, as the young fellow showed signs of brilliant gifts, the brooding man was stung with jealous dread. Enthusiasm gave place to ill-humours. The youngster bore the black moods of his master with patient dignity until he could suffer the malevolence no longer, and left him. Gersaint gave him all his sympathy.

The lonely lad became a prey to misery. The dread of failure came to him, coupled with the enmity of the man who was his idol. Shy and reserved, detesting the cynical atmosphere of Parisian society, he went into hiding, giving all his strength to work. By 1717, at twenty-two, he was beginning to make a mark. Choosing for his subjects the Amorous Conversations and Fêtes Galantes of his master, he closely imitated his style, if imparting into his scenes a more middle-class atmosphere.

The South Kensington *Fête Champêtre* pronounces this air.

Rarely leaving his studio, and with the dread of want before his eyes, he painted for livelihood, and was soon making the getting of money his industrious aim; by consequence he did not go to Nature as much as he ought. Living alone, unmarried, taking no pleasures abroad, he wrought unceasingly for an ever-increasing host of patrons. Blondel de Gagny, the rich friend of struggling artists, took him up and introduced him to

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

Julienne and Crozat. The wide vogue for illustrations from *Les Contes de la Fontaine* swept Pater into its flood, and gave him subjects for twenty-eight pictures, many of which he repeated, all of which were engraved. The *Romans comiques de Scarron* also gave him many subjects that fitted well his Flemish genius in the Teniers style seen through the spectacles of Watteau. Scarron had been husband to Françoise d'Aubigné, whom Louis XIV afterwards married as the Maintenon.

Pater was twenty-six when, to his great joy, in 1721, the dying Watteau sent for him and made reparation by teaching him during the last few weeks of his life with the old enthusiasm. Pater bore witness that this "was the only fruitful teaching he had ever received."

Pater now rapidly came into vogue; in the December of 1728—upon his thirty-third birthday—he was received into the Academy. The chief of his "Pièces de Réception" was the *Réjouissance des Soldats*, akin to Watteau's early military pieces. Of his later period is the fine portrait of *Mademoiselle a'Angeville*, engraved by Le Bas.

But life was to be near as short for Pater as for his master. On the 25th of July 1736, in his fortieth year, broken down by incessant work, alone and without a friend near him, in his humble lodging by the Pont Neuf, he lay down and died. The money he sought his life long, for which he stinted himself all pleasure in life, he was not to enjoy. Dreading poverty in old age, he died knowing nothing but poverty.

Though Pater did not in ordinary vein approach his master, and is cold and weaker, he had his moments; and in those moments he painted with such rare skill that the work of his hand is so difficult to set below his master, that it passes still for the art of Watteau. The Wallace holds a superb *Fête Galante* by him, and a *Conversation Galante*; Berlin has his masterpiece, a *Blind Man's Buff*, amongst several others; Edinburgh his *Les Baigneuses*; the Crewe *Réunion dans un Jardin* is a fine work. The Louvre has a well-known *Fête Champêtre*. Indeed, the Wallace, the Louvre, and Potsdam are richest in him.

MEUSNIER
1655 – 1734

Philippe Meusnier, born in Paris in 1655, though much older than Watteau, was so intimate a friend that both Watteau and Pater painted figures into his landscapes for him. Going to Rome, he developed a liking for decorating church-interiors. On coming back to Paris he had a wide vogue for the decoration of houses, painting both for Louis xiv, for whom in 1680 he decorated the ceiling of the chapel at Versailles, and for Louis xv. Received into the Academy in 1702, he wrought as his picture of reception *Un Paysage vu à travers d'une Arcade.* Nancy has two paintings by him, *Interior of a Palace* and *Une Galerie en pleine air*, with figures by Watteau. One of his sons became pupil to Largillière.

ANGELIS
1685–1734

Born at Dunkirk in 1685, Pierre Angelis (or Angillis), having learnt in his town what he could of the mysteries, went to Flanders and Germany, studied the Old Masters at Berlin and Düsseldorf, and settled in Antwerp, joining the Guild thereat, and painting *Conversations* and *Landscapes with figures* in the manner of Teniers and of Watteau. Later, he imitated Rubens, Van Dyck, and Snyders. Thence he went to England for many years; thence in 1728 to Rome, where he worked hard, came into great vogue, and made a fortune. Quitting Rome in 1731, he returned to France and settled at Rennes. Though weak in colour he was more natural than most of the painters of his age. He died at Rennes in 1734.

DE LA JOUE
1687 – 1761

Jacques de la Joue (or de Lajoue) studied architecture, was admitted to the Academy in 1721, and painted in the style of Watteau and Lancret. He died in Paris in 1761.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

MERCIER
1689 – 1760

Born in Berlin of French parents, PHILIPPE MERCIER was trained under ANTOINE PESNE, Court-painter to the King of Prussia. On reaching manhood, Mercier went to Italy, thence to France, studying art. On going back to Germany he settled at Hanover, caught the notice of Frederick, Prince of Wales, son of George II of England, and came to England in his suite. He painted portraits of the Royal Family. Getting into the bad graces of the Court, he withdrew to a mean lodging in Covent Garden. He painted a portrait of *Peg Woffington.* Besides portraits, he painted domestic and humorous pictures of the life of the people, with the realism of Teniers toned down by the grace of Watteau. He was considerably engraved by Simon, M'Ardell, Faber, Houston, and Ravenet. Mercier's portrait of *Himself* in a dressing-gown was engraved by Faber in 1735. His masterpiece is *L'Escamoteur*, at the Louvre, long given to Watteau; and many so-called Watteaus are by him. He died in 1760.

JEAURAT
1689 – 1787

Born in Paris in 1689, ETIENNE JEAURAT became pupil to Vleugels, the friend of Watteau. On friendly terms with Watteau, he caught the spirit of the *Fêtes Galantes.* Going to Rome in youth, he studied historical painting there for several years. Received into the Academy in 1735, and passing from honour to honour thereat, he was made Painter to the King in 1767, and became Keeper of the Royal Pictures at Versailles. Painting with considerable spirit, but somewhat weak in his handling, Jeaurat was fond of country-scenes, the life of the people, wrought as well mythology and history; he was also a portrait-painter. He worked much for the churches of Paris. His Watteauesque *Une Noce de Village* was woven into tapestry at Gobelins. He was much engraved. Jeaurat died at Versailles

in 1787, an old man. The Louvre, Orléans, and Besançon possess many of his works.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE GAIETY OF THE TROUBLED SOUL OF WATTEAU DESCEND UPON THE PAINTERS OF FRANCE

TROOST
1697 – 1750

CORNELIS TROOST, born at Amsterdam in 1697, pupil to Arnold van Boonen, the portrait-painter, became known for pictures of the life of the people seen by candle-light. Akin to Teniers, Hogarth, and Watteau, Troost was a good colourist, and an ardent student of Nature. He had a rich vein of comedy, and gave it to the delineation of the manners and amusements of the middle class. Though a Dutchman, the influence of Watteau is most marked in his *Conversations*. The Hague has his *Deceived Lovers* and *Wedding of Kloris and Roosje* under Watteau influence; whilst Hampton Court has a typical military piece. He was also an excellent portrait-painter. Signing all he wrought, he also dated his works. The Hague, Amsterdam, Haarlem, Rotterdam, Bamberg, and Schwerin hold his canvases. And at Amsterdam and Rotterdam are portrait-groups of guilds in the Dutch fashion. To whatever he did, oils, water-colour, pastels, drawings, or mezzotints, he brought distinction. Going to Zwolle in 1720, at twenty-three he married there Maria van Dulin, and returning to Amsterdam became a burgess of that city in 1726, dying there in 1750. His family were artistic after him; and his daughter SARA TROOST, born in 1731, came to considerable fame as a painter of portraits, and of landscapes with figures, in the manner of Watteau.

DE BAR
1700 – 1729

BONAVENTURA DE BAR, or DES BARRES, born in Paris in 1700, became 'prentice to CLAUDE HALLÉ; and entered the Academy in 1728, the Louvre having his picture of reception, *Une Fête Champêtre* as well as *La Foire de Bezon*. He died in 1729, very young.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

NOLLEKENS
1702 – 1748

JOSEPH FRANÇOIS NOLLEKENS, born at Antwerp in 1702, the son of a painter of repute in London, became pupil to Tillemann, a painter of domestic subjects and of landscape, but gave his whole aim to copying works by Watteau. In 1733 he went to England, and was soon in considerable vogue, working for Lord Cobham at Howe, and for Lord Tilney. *Une Conversation Galante* shows his devotion to Watteau. He delighted in musical parties and fashionable assemblies in the open air, in which the park at Wanstead makes the landscape. Nollekens married Mary Anne Le Sacq. He was fond of painting children at play. He died in 1748, being buried in St. Anne's, Soho.

Nollekens is known as "Old Nollekens"; his son John Joseph Nollekens it was who became famous as a sculptor in England.

LIOTARD
1702 – 1788

On the 22nd of December 1702, in far Geneva, there came into the world twin sons to a small tradesman, one Antoine Liotard, a French Protestant refugee from Montélimar. Destined for commerce, JEAN ETIENNE LIOTARD showed early such marked artistic bent that he was allowed to become an artist, and his brother was soon following in his footsteps. *Liotard* was a vigorous-bodied and handsome boy, and grew up a great handsome man. Soon passing his master, Professor Gardelle, the lad worked on his own account, painting miniatures, one of which, coming under the eye of Petitot, caused that artist to take the young fellow into his own studio, where he learnt painting and enamelling.

Making rapid strides, Liotard began to work in the new medium of the pastel that Rosalba had brought into the vogue in Paris, when, in 1725, he got packing and left for the French capital to try his fortunes. Becoming the pupil of MASSÉ, he

went thence into the studio of Lemoyne, Boucher's old master; and, at Lemoyne's, young Liotard caused quite a sensation. His work was soon in considerable request. Learning engraving, he made several plates after Watteau.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE GAIETY OF THE TROUBLED SOUL OF WATTEAU DESCEND UPON THE PAINTERS OF FRANCE

Liotard was winning to wide success as painter, pastellist, engraver, miniaturist, enameller, and what not, when, suddenly in 1735, he turned his back on the city that was making him one of its idols, and, joining the suite of the French Ambassador to Naples, he started on that restless wandering life that was to be his career for the rest of his days. Visiting many picture-galleries from Naples, he was called by the Pope, and painted *Clement XII* and several of the Cardinals. He was now working much in pastel also. Though pressed by the Pope and by Society to settle in Rome, drawn by tales of the Levant he joined some English noblemen and went with them to Constantinople, where he lived for four years. He allowed his beard to grow, took to the Eastern dress, and was soon known as "The Turk."

From Turkey he went to Moldavia, making portraits and other pictures for the prince at Jassy; by 1749 he was at Vienna, being well received by the Emperor Francis I and the Empress Maria Theresa, and painted their portraits, as well as those of most of the Imperial family.

In 1751 he was again in Paris, the centre of a huge success, and one of the rages of the town, in his long beard and Eastern habit. To the Salons of 1752 and 1753 he sent works which brought him almost a triumph, and would have swept him into the Academy had it not been that his unconventional life offended the pious Louis XV and his bigoted advisers. However, unofficially, the king smiled upon "The Turk," and allowed several miniatures to be painted of his sacred majesty; whilst many of the fancy boxes, bracelets, and the like fal-lals of the royal princesses were decorated by his skilful hands.

But "The Turk" got restless after two years of incessant flattery, and, tearing himself away from the gay city, he risked the sea-sickness of the Channel and landed in England in 1753,

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

to be the huge success in London that he had been elsewhere. The Princess of Wales sat to him; the young princes and princesses likewise, and many of the great nobility. For three years "The Turk" knew London town, and was one of its sensations.

In 1756 the wander-spirit seized Liotard again, and he made for Holland. Here he painted or pastelled the Dutch Court. In Holland he settled for several years—some sixteen. Marie Fargues, a pretty French girl of Amsterdam, won him, and he married her in 1771. But his seventieth year was to see him packing again. Seventy, the "Turk" all gone out of him, packing up a large collection of the Old Masters and many works of his own hands, Liotard passed over to England again, in 1772, to the scene of his old triumphs, sold these treasures in London at great profit, and sent portraits to the Royal Academy of 1773 and 1774. But the years were beginning to stoop the big figure of the handsome fellow; in 1776 he bade farewell to England and made for his native Geneva, with wife and children. There he worked at his art and various crafts until death took him on the 21st of September 1789.

A good colourist, working on glass, on porcelain, or in enamel, or whatever came to hand—not least of all are his etchings—he will be remembered for his gifts in the art of the pastel as much as for his paintings; for his landscapes as much as for his figure-subjects. He mastered many of the problems of light. His best-known work is *La Belle Liseuse* at Amsterdam. Amsterdam also has his *Countess of Coventry*, and *Le Maréchal Maurice Saxe*. Dresden has his famous pastel, *La Chocolatière*, of 1745. His best-known engraving is of Watteau's *Le Chat Malade*.

His twin-brother, J. M. LIOTARD, became famous as an engraver of paintings after Boucher, Watteau, and the masters of his day.

QUILLERT

1711 - 1739

Born in Paris in 1711, PIERRE ANTOINE QUILLERT, or QUILLARD, drew so well at the age of eleven that he caught the

eye of Cardinal Fleury, the king's minister, who procured for the young fellow from Louis xv a pension. A disciple of Watteau, he fell under the complete thrall of the *Embarquement pour la Cythère*. The Swiss doctor Merveilleux, going to Portugal to write his natural history of that country, took the young fellow with him to draw the illustrations; and he was soon afterwards presented to the king for whom he painted a *Conversation*, and was made Painter to the Court. At Lisbon he painted the ceilings in the queen's apartments; pictures in the palace of the Duca di Cadaval, and several portraits and *Fêtes Galantes*, as well as decorating the royal carriages. He became a good etcher. He died at Lisbon in 1739, but twenty-eight years of age.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE GAIETY OF THE TROUBLED SOUL OF WATTEAU DESCEND UPON THE PAINTERS OF FRANCE

OLLIVIER

1712 – 1784

MICHAEL BARTHÉLEMY OLLIVIER, born at Marseilles in 1712, became a member of the Royal Academy in 1766 as a painter of landscape and of the life of the people. He came to wide repute as a miniature-painter. For the Prince de Condé, to whom he was painter, he wrought several pictures in the manner of Watteau. The Bordeaux painting of *Une Famille reposant sous les arbres*, long given to Lancret, has been discovered to bear Ollivier's signature. He went to Spain some time during the decade of 1767-1777, and painted there several *Conversations*, the figures being in Spanish dress. Coming back to France, he wrought for Condé the *Fête Champêtre*, *Une Chasse aux Cerfs*, *Un Souper dans un Temple*, and the *Portrait de Mozart*, all now at Versailles. He is very fond of bringing dogs into his pictures. His masterpiece is accounted to be the *Thé à l'Anglaise* at Versailles, painted in 1773—the Louvre has a variant into which the boy Mozart is introduced, playing at the piano. Ollivier was also an engraver. Lancret and Pater were the earlier, Quillert and Ollivier the later disciples of Watteau, who came to chief repute in their realm. Ollivier died in 1784 at Paris, a prosperous man.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

EISEN
1720 – 1778

Born at Valenciennes in 1720, CHARLES DOMINIQUE JOSEPH EISEN, son to a portrait-painter FRANÇOIS EISEN, and trained by him, went at twenty-one to Paris, to the studio of LE BAS. A brilliant and witty man, he was soon in favour with the Court, where he became professor to the Pompadour. The king made him Painter to the Court. He was a member of the Academy of St. Luke. Alençon, Bordeaux, and Bourg are rich in his works. The Bourg *L'Escarpolette* of 1771, the four Bordeaux *Berger et Bergère*, *L'Oiseleur*, *Villageoises dansant dans la campagne*, and *Villagers reposing under a tree*, all prove that Eisen had looked upon the art of Lancret as well as on that of Watteau. He etched much.

Leaving Paris in 1777, Eisen went to Brussels, to live a year in dire want and suffering, from which death relieved him in 1778, leaving behind him a mass of work, designs for book-covers, and vignette illustrations in red chalk in the Watteau manner which are famous.

LAVREINCE
1737 – 1807

NICOLAS LAFRENSEN or LAVREINCE, born at Stockholm in 1737, and trained in miniature-painting by his father, went to Paris in 1771 to come into wide vogue for his portraits. A couple of years thereafter, in 1773, he returned to Stockholm, was elected to the Academy of that city, became Court-painter, and painted several historical pictures. In the following year of 1774 he was again in Paris, came under the spell of Watteau, Lancret, and Pater, and painted *Fêtes Champêtres* and *Conversations*. He came into wide demand and was much engraved. He died in Stockholm in 1807. Lavreince is to-day a cult with the "superior person," the expert who talks cant about the suggestiveness of Boucher, who never stooped to the smug indecencies such as Lavreince painted in his *L'Heureux Moment* and *Le Repentir Tardif*.

TAUNAY
1755–1830

NICOLAS ANTOINE TAUNAY, born in Paris in 1755, became pupil to B. CASSANOVA, the follower of Watteau. That he was in considerable need is proved by a king's pension being procured for him, wherewith he went to Rome for three years. His art is wholly founded on that of Watteau and Lancret. In 1795, on the creation of the Institute, he became a foundation member. He died in Paris in 1830.

FRANÇOIS WATTEAU
1758 – 1813

FRANÇOIS LOUIS JOSEPH WATTEAU was born at Valenciennes in 1758 to LOUIS JOSEPH WATTEAU (born at Valenciennes in 1731), a cousin of the great Watteau. Louis Joseph Watteau settled at Lille, where he was professor of painting of the nude to the Academy there. François, trained by his father, won the medal of honour at the Lille Academy in 1774, and went to Paris, where he completely fell under the spell of the art of his great kinsman. Going back to Lille in 1785, he succeeded his father in 1798 as professor there. He changed the atmosphere of Watteau's *fêtes galantes* from French to Flemish. He died at Lille in 1813.

We must now turn to the portrait of these days, before surveying the greater school that arose out of the genius of Watteau—Boucher and his pupil Fragonard, Chardin and Greuze, De Troy and Coypel. At the same time we must remember that ETIENNE AUBRY, BOILLY, HUET, PESNE, TRINQUESSE, and WILLE, though they were pupils and imitators of other men, were deeply indebted to Watteau.

CHAPTER XV

WHEREIN WE SEE THE PORTRAIT OF THE YEARS OF WATTEAU CHANGE THE GREAT ONES INTO ELEGANT GODS AND GODDESSES

THE EARLY PORTRAIT UNDER LOUIS XV

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

MIGNARD and Rigaud and Largillière had carried the spirit of King Sun's pompous and magnificent century into Louis the Fifteenth's earlier years of charm and grace; and they had done it with a fine air. Largillière indeed caught more than a little of the new vision—as, in fact, he had always hinted at something of that vision.

The man who emerged to paint the Court of the age was an artist upon whom the critics have poured the gall of a bitter lack of comprehension. Nothing proves the sterility of bookish criticism more clearly than the written estimates of the art of NATTIER. Painting the Court of the new king of elegance and charm, he sought out the grace and elegance of that superficial class with a truth that reveals its gracious charm and its elaborate insincerity, such as no portrait-painter of the times has given us. He was to the Court and aristocracy of Louis the Fifteenth's day what Van Dyck was to our cavaliers. He gave them all regal grace as Van Dyck gave all his English portraits the cavalier strut and splendour. And had he tried instead to display them as vigorous of soul, and strong of noble purpose, he would have descended to the unforgivable lie in art. But treating this class with all the glamour of their outward bearing, showing it the shallow thing it was, he lays himself open to the charge of superficial art; and criticism, incapable of receiving the true impression of art, leaps at the superficiality and pins it to the artist's rare and exquisite artistry. The pompous critics

of the day attacked it on grounds outside the realm of art; and for generations, down to our own day, their canting phrases have been repeated. Nattier needs no apology.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE PORTRAIT OF THE YEARS OF WATTEAU CHANGE THE GREAT ONES INTO ELEGANT GODS AND GODDESSES

NATTIER
1685–1766

A year after Watteau first saw the light, there was born in Paris in 1685 to a portrait-painter named JEAN MARC NATTIER, generally called MARC NATTIER, a boy-child whom his father christened after himself JEAN MARC NATTIER, who was to paint the great ones of the age of Louis the Fifteenth in splendid fashion. Nor should Jean Marc Nattier, *the* Nattier, be confused with his elder brother JEAN BAPTISTE NATTIER, an historical painter, who, unfortunately, after his reception into the Academy in 1712, became entangled in the disgraceful scandal which sent him to the Bastille, where he took his own life in 1726.

Jean Marc Nattier, *the* Nattier, was the son, not only of a distinguished portrait-painter of the same name, but of an artist mother, MARIE COURTOIS, a well-known miniaturist. Young Nattier, taught by his father, went to the Academy schools and studied in the gallery of the Luxembourg, where he made the drawings from the Médicis pictures by Rubens for the engravers to work upon. He early shaped towards portrait-painting, in which he soon became famous. He won the favour of the old king, and on the death of Louis XIV, going to Amsterdam at thirty-one, with the minister of Peter the Great, he painted several of the great ones of the Russian Court. Thence he went to the Hague to paint the *Czarina*, and her delight with her portrait won him the favour of the Czar, who was then in Paris, and there he painted his *Peter the Great*. So delighted was the Czar that he commanded Nattier to go to St. Petersburg and to settle there; but the Parisian flinched from the rough journey and the cold of Russia, dreaded the exile. His refusal enraged the autocrat of the Russias, who carried off the royal portraits without payment.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

In 1718 Nattier was elected to the Academy—his thirty-third year. He was rapidly coming to considerable fortune; but the bursting of the great bubble blown by the financier Law demolished not only his fortune but that of his wife.

Thenceforth, for some forty years, Nattier gave himself up wholly to portraiture, winning to wide fame and repute. The pose of the great ones of the age wavered between shepherds and shepherdesses in pastorals and the gods of Olympus. Watteau had conquered. The Court naturally preferred Olympus. And as Olympians the great ones strutted it; and as Olympians Nattier painted them, with astounding skill, showing the French grace and charm and lack of godlike force just as he saw it. Yet this truth, this sincerity of stating insincerity, is exactly that for which he is assailed by bookish men as being insincere! As though insincerity should be shown sincere! As though some of the greatest masters had not made the great strut in godlike pose! What is held to be a virtue in a Van Dyck or Rubens is held to be a vileness in a Nattier. But Nattier was an artist, not a philosopher. As he saw them on their make-believe heights and set in their make-believe heavens, so he posed them, and thereby uttered the age in a series of superb portraits wherein the great ones of the Court smirk and strut as Hebe and Dawn, as Flora and the rest of it. And he tickled their conceit in the doing and won into ever wider vogue. There was but one shadow over the fantastic business: the great ones of the Court, even whilst they played the god, did not pay like gods. Great as was the art of Chardin and Latour, without the book of Nattier we should have been robbed of a significant chapter in the life of France. He painted the *Châteauroux* as *Le Point du Jour*.

In 1762 grievous illness fell upon the painter, and filched the brush from his deft fingers; and after four years of suffering, ghastly years that were brightened by the care of his daughters, death came to his relief in 1766.

Nattier had lost his promising son, who had been drowned at Rome.

XI

NATTIER
1685–1766

"MADAME LOUISE"

(VERSAILLES)

Madame Louise, daughter of Louis XV., as a child, tricked out in all the elaborate gowning of the grown women of these elegant and dandified years.

TOCQUÉ
1696 – 1772

WHEREIN WE SEE THE PORTRAIT OF THE YEARS OF WATTEAU CHANGE THE GREAT ONES INTO ELEGANT GODS AND GODDESSES

Louis Tocqué was born in 1696. Serving his apprenticeship to art under a mediocre painter, Bertin, he lost scant time in the pursuit of the grand style, early settling down to develop his marked gifts in portraiture. He married one of the loyal daughters of Nattier. But whilst he brought to his art the gift of stating the breeding and fine manner so redolent of the art of Nattier, he, from the first, was more deeply concerned with character. He was in repute when the Salon of 1737 opened its doors, for he displayed works thereat, and at every Salon thereafter his fine art was to be seen. His portrait of the young Dauphin in 1739 seems to have brought him into still wider favour, though it is scarcely of his highest achievement; it proves also his favour at Court, of which he became thenceforth a painter. *The Queen*, Marie Leczinska, he painted in 1740, and the princesses sat to him. The portrait of the Pompadour's brother *De Marigny*, at Versailles, is one of his supreme works. All the great ones were limned by him, and wondrous well. But, perhaps, his very gift of stating character makes him happiest in his portraiture of men of more marked personal individuality. In 1757 he journeyed to Russia to paint the Empress Elizabeth and the great about her; thence, the year after, to Denmark to paint the king and queen and the royal family; whence, loaded with honours, and with considerable fortune, in 1759 he came back to Paris to be hailed by the Academy. Denmark again drew him north, and he returned to Paris to receive the grant of apartments at the Louvre. The master of a rare gift of portraiture, to which he brought a frank feeling for character and as fine a virtue of sincerity, he died in 1772. The Louvre holds his famous *Madame Danger*.

CHAPTER XVI

WHEREIN, OUT OF THE KITCHEN, ENTERS INTO FRANCE ONE OF THE SUPREME PAINTERS OF ALL TIME

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

Louis XIV had broken the power of the nobles by granting that power to the great merchant class, granting them the office of *fermier-général* (farmers-general of revenue), whereby they handled, and mishandled the taxes of large districts. But this was no democratic move; there was a vast gulf between the aristocracy and the people, whether traders or peasants, who had no say in the government, and were looked upon merely as animals to be bled by tax and war for the State. To utter in art the significance of the one was to portray a part of the nation divided by worlds from the other. But it is the constant mistake of the critics to treat the art of France in the seventeen-hundreds as merely a light, frivolous, aristocratic art. The people were beginning to speak, the artists were uttering their significance the whole while, the wits and the philosophers were giving tongue to the rights of the race. And, in the languid atmosphere of the earlier century, under the heel of the privileged classes, was arising a real France that was to overwhelm that aristocracy in a fearful blood-letting.

The brothers Le Nain had hymned the people. And now, under Watteau—indeed, his eyes opened by the art of Watteau, was to arise one as great as he, to become immortal as Chardin.

King Sun's dying eyes beheld a France weary of the mock-heroic strut—a France behind and beyond the perruques of his elaborate courtiers—a France exhausted by glory, bored by pomp, her treasuries empty; the heritage he was delivering over to the sickly child who stood at the foot of the throne held a great glamour of renown and splendour of State to be maintained, with scant resource wherewith to maintain it.

WHEREIN, OUT OF THE KITCHEN, ENTERS INTO FRANCE ONE OF THE SUPREME PAINTERS OF ALL TIME

But what he did not see was that even amidst the pomposities the sincerities were being born. The Fronde had failed to give the people power; but out of the Fronde were born ambitions, hopes, visions that were to bring forth wits and armed men—and at the end of all, for the great uprooting, the guillotine—in the years to come. Out of the Fronde were born virile souls to France, who were to destroy the tyrannies of her popinjay lords. With wit and subtle contempt, with enthusiasms and mighty dreams, they were to imbue the down-trodden people with self-confidence and belief in the splendour of their destiny.

The torch that roused to awakening was to be no too-sudden conflagration, such as had wasted the people's might during the Fronde and brought it to naught, but a slow and steady illumination across the length and breadth of the land. And you shall find it, not only in her politics, but in her literature and her arts, slowly catching flame, and shedding a beacon-light to her groaning millions.

Men were being born without public rejoicings who were to fling the mightiest from their seats. . . .

CHARDIN

1699 – 1779

On the 2nd of November, in the last year of the sixteen-hundreds, was born, in the Rue de Seine in Paris, a man-child, JEAN BAPTISTE SIMÉON CHARDIN, who was to give France the note of reality, of simple truth, the glamour of the homely thing. He was the second son of Jean Chardin, a carpenter—as the Court phrase has it, "carpenter to the pocket-money of the king"—his mother one Françoise David. The carpenter had five children: Noël Sebastien Chardin; Siméon, our artist; Juste, who became like his father carpenter to the king; Marie Claude; and Marie Agnes, a worker in linen. The father was syndic of his corporation, a man of standing amongst carpenters. He made billiard-tables, of which indeed he was maker to the king at Versailles; and he destined his sons to the

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

same calling. The second son, our Siméon, however, showed early signs of his artistic bent; but his father, in horror at the lad's taking up so precarious a means of livelihood, insisted on the youngster going into his workshops. Chardin always regretted these early years lost to the culture of his mind. At last the carpenter to the king's pocket-money gave in; and sent the youth into the studio of Cazes, a mediocre painter of the Academy, a man of conventional mind and achievement in the historical and mythological style created by Le Brun. This man's training of pupils lay in the giving them his own works to copy, from which the young fellow learnt little, being the rather fretted to restlessness under the tedious craftsmanship without models. In the evenings, however, he was attending the drawing-school at the Academy. Chardin was saved by veriest chance. The young Noël Nicolas Coypel, to whose studio he next went as assistant, set him a gun to paint into one of his pictures. Chardin was surprised to see the trouble that Coypel took to polish the barrel; thenceforth the young fellow paid his whole attention to the models before him. At Coypel's he had the good fortune to be chosen, with other pupils of the Academy, by Jean Baptiste van Loo, to assist van Loo in restoring one of the pictures in the great gallery at Fontainebleau. This was long said to have been Chardin's only journey outside Paris—nor was his second much farther afield. The young fellow came out of the business with increasing reputation; and was forthwith commissioned to paint a swinging sign for a surgeon, whereon he painted a scene, *After the Duel*, which brought him considerable notoriety on being set over the worthy surgeon's place of practice, even Academicians joining the crowd in the street before the bewildered surgeon's door to gaze at it. This sign-painter was destined to purify the whole art of France. Such strange beginnings has greatness!

He was an honest, kindly, homely and honourable [illegible] whose sincerity and high integrity illumined all his art, Chardin. He was soon giving himself up to the painting of still-life and of dead animals. With such skill he wrought

these simple things, bringing such truth and dignity of sincerity to his craftsmanship, that his old master Cazes, seeing several of his works, took them for originals by the great Dutch masters; the highest tribute, surely, that the academic mind can pay!

WHEREIN, OUT OF THE KITCHEN, ENTERS INTO FRANCE ONE OF THE SUPREME PAINTERS OF ALL TIME

Frugal, his wants but few, the circle in which he moved but modest, Chardin put his whole being into the art that he loved, regardless of fashion.

The young artists were wont to display their works in the Place Dauphine, "weather permitting," on the day of the Fête-Dieu, the people being compelled to decorate the place by hanging out their tapestries and carpets from the windows during the procession from six in the morning to midday—this display being known as the *Exposition de la Jeunesse*. Since the closing of the Salon, the Academicians themselves added to the display, until the Salon opened again in 1737. The Director of the Academy, Louis de Boullogne, induced Louis XV to reopen the Salon in 1725 for four days; but it was not repeated.

In 1728 Chardin showed at the *Exposition de la Jeunesse* his now famous masterpieces *La Raie* (the Skate) and the *Buffet*, with ten other paintings of "dead Nature." The effect was prodigious. A new artist had arisen, the peer of the great Dutch masters!

Urged to it by his friends, he presented himself for election to the Academy in the September of 1728.

Arranging his pictures in the first room of the Academy at the Louvre, the shy fellow awaited the result with anxiety. But Largillière, the first to enter, having looked at the pictures, asked Chardin: "You have here some very fine pictures by some good Flemish painter—an excellent school for colour—now let us see your works."

"Sir," said Chardin, "you have just seen them."

"What! are these your pictures? . . . Then present yourself, my friend, present yourself."

Cazes followed, to be likewise deceived.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

Chardin was elected amidst great enthusiasm. He had the high honour of being "accepted" (*agrée*) and admitted (*reçu*) at the same time, his two pictures *Le Buffet* and *Une Cuisine* being selected as his pictures of reception. On the 25th of September 1728 he was sworn in, and his entrance fee reduced to 100 livres on account of his narrow means.

Chardin had sold his pictures for modest sums that made it impossible for him to live by his art, for he was a slow and finished worker. His lack of means had put off the marriage with Marguerite Sainctar, arranged by his father. He had met the girl at one of the little dances of the tradesfolk in their quarter. Then the girl lost her parents, and, her fortune gone, had to seek refuge with her guardian, one Pérant, a small merchant who had his shop in the Rue de la Verrarie in which Boucher had been born, but living in the Rue Princesse near by, or rather the Rue Férou off it. The worthy carpenter forthwith banned the girl; but Chardin, a loyal and honourable man, held to the distressed damsel, marrying her on the 1st of February 1731. They went to live in the Rue Princesse with Chardin's parents; and there his life was spent until his second marriage in 1744. The house is still to be seen, in the ill-lit rooms and courts of which he painted some of the masterpieces of his age and of all time. Here was born his son, Pierre Chardin, whose brilliant promise as a painter was to be shattered, as was his father's pride and hopes in him, by his early death. Two years afterwards (1733) was born his little daughter Marguerite Agnes, who died in her second year, on the same day as her mother, the 14th of April 1735.

In 1734 Chardin began painting that series of figures at their daily employment which greatly increased his reputation. It is interesting to note that whilst Chardin lived he was contrasted with Teniers—always to Chardin's disadvantage—by the critics! Aved is said to have turned upon Chardin with contemptuous "Do you imagine that a portrait is as easy to paint as furred tongues or sausages?"

Where are Aved's portraits now?

WHEREIN, OUT OF THE KITCHEN, ENTERS INTO FRANCE ONE OF THE SUPREME PAINTERS OF ALL TIME

Chardin the while was winning to ever-increasing power in his art, for all his modesty and simplicity of life. A short man, "strong and muscular," his round, genial face, benevolent aspect, and honest eyes, were well fitted to his solid, serious, middle-class figure. He was of that class that kept its high tradition of good-fellowship and loyalty and uprightness of conduct amidst all this fantastic century of Louis Quinze, His reserve covered a noble sense of dignity, and he was implicitly trusted by all with whom he came into contact. Yet, shy as he was of personal advertisement or of thrusting himself forward, modest as he was about himself and his art, his blood rose hotly at an insult or a vulgar slight, as he proved when he flung the insolent lackey of the wealthy Crozat, Baron de Thiers, down the stairs.

Chardin was a supreme master. His criticism, though it was said to err on the side of encouraging every one, was sound; and he gave many profound maxims to the studios. An artist had been boasting before him of ways he had discovered whereby to purify and perfect his colours; Chardin brushed him aside with his deep saying, "What! sir—you say that one paints with colours?"

"With what, then?" gasped the astounded one.

"One uses colours," said Chardin, "but *one paints with the feelings*."

His goodness to students was a byword. He knew no meanness, no jealousy, no pettiness. Amongst artists he was ever the peacemaker. He was a born encourager.

He knew no greed. He sold his pictures for what was offered for them. His joy was in the achieving.

His friend, the engraver, Le Bas, wished to buy a picture; Chardin, with a comical look at him, said he would exchange it for his fine waistcoat, and Le Bas procured his desire therewith. The king's sister admires a pastel portrait, asks the price; Chardin begs her to accept it "as a token of gratitude for her interest in his art." Such a man could never grow rich.

Around him Romance flung no cloak of picturesque

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

adventure. His art needed no enhancement. His was a humdrum existence, first in his home in the little Rue Princesse, which he was only to leave when he went to take up his quarters in the Louvre at the State's granting him that honour. He was of the type of man to whom nothing "happens"—except the grey toil for livelihood, and only too often a harsh marriage, with which, fortunately, he was not to be cursed.

But to get back to that year of 1734 when he began his paintings of the life of the people. He sent sixteen works to the *Exposition de la Jeunesse*, of which were the *Boy with the Top*; the Hermitage *Washerwoman*; the *Woman drawing Water*, which he repeated often—Stockholm, Sir Francis Cook, and M. Marcille possessing the finest examples; the Berlin *Lady sealing a Letter*, the life-sized Rothschild *Card Table*. These subjects drew a crowd of patrons to him, of whom were the art-loving Swedish Ambassador, Count Tessin, and Prince Liechtenstein.

Chardin saw life with frank vision, and wrought his art with a directness and an individual statement that thrust his achievement amongst the immortal things made by man's hands.

The Homely got upon the town.

Chardin was now a vogue. But he asked so low a price for his work, over which he was very slow, that fortune smiled but at a distance. In 1735 he increased his reputation by the eight pictures he sent to the *Jeunesse* display, the year of his Hermitage *La Blanchisseuse* and the Marcille *La Fontaine*, or *Woman drawing Water*.

To the first Salon of Louis xv's France, opened in 1737, Chardin sent several works that included the *Chemist* (Le Souffleur) and pictures of children at play, in which he showed a rare insight into the homely charm of which the subject is fragrant.

To 1739 belongs the Liechtenstein *The Governess*, the famous Louvre *La Pourvoyeuse*, and the superb Munich *La Batisseuse de Navets* (Peeling Turnips).

XII

CHARDIN

1699–1779

"LA GOUVERNANTE"

(In the Collection of Prince Liechtenstein in Vienna)

WHEREIN, OUT OF THE KITCHEN, ENTERS INTO FRANCE ONE OF THE SUPREME PAINTERS OF ALL TIME

In 1740 Chardin won wide repute with his *Grace before Meat*, of which Stockholm has a replica—the year of his somewhat tasteless *Monkey Painter* and *Monkey Antiquary* at the Louvre—the year also of the fine *La Mère Laborieuse* at the Louvre.

Chardin had overworked for pathetically small prices; in the Salon of 1741 were but two works, *The Morning Toilet* and *The Castle of Cards*. In 1742 he became seriously ill. His art had increased in power year by year, and his reputation with it. Mariette wrote, like the mediocrity he was, with patronage it is true, of his "heavy and monotonous touch, his lack of facility," and the rest of it, including "lack of truth in colouring"! Asses brayed even in the seventeen-hundreds. Diderot also fell to drivel about Chardin's "low nature," and the like; but, then, it was Chardin's habit to be alone when he painted —and the unenviable habit perhaps fretted the garrulous scribblers of his day, who resented being kept out of his studio.

The loss of his wife and girl-child had been a heavy blow to the painter. His youth went with them. He had gone to live with his mother after their death; and she died in the November of 1743. He lived alone with his little son a while; then, on the 26th of November 1744, he married Françoise Marguerite Pouget, a woman of thirty-seven, widow to a musqueteer from Rouen, who lived at No. 13 in the same Rue Princesse, and had some fortune. Chardin went to her home upon his marriage. She was a capable and business-like soul, who helped Chardin in the ordering of his life; and of her he was to make a famous pastel now at the Louvre, one of the greatest achievements in this medium. She was a somewhat austere stepmother to Chardin's boy. A girl was born of the marriage, but did not live.

Chardin's health seems to have mended in 1746, for he began to show works. He trends back to his old love of still-life. Though he owned his house, Chardin was not making money; he seems to have been hard put to it for livelihood; and in 1752, the king having been appealed to by the Academy

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

for help for him, Marigny wrote to him that the king granted him a pension of five hundred livres. In 1755 he was given the office of treasurer to the Royal Academy and the somewhat thankless office of "arranger of pictures at the Salon." It was a tribute to his high honour and integrity, for the money affairs of the Academy were in a sad state. Henceforth his own works were shown to their least advantage, for Chardin had the hanging of them. He took over a heavy debt; indeed, the king's pensions were paid in royal spasms when long overdue.

Eighteen months thereafter, Chardin was awarded the great prize of the Academy—apartments at the Louvre. Here he was thoroughly happy, with Tocqué, Lemoyne the sculptor, Restout, Boucher, La Tour, Lepicié, and Cochin for his comrades. Leading his monotonous life of heavy labour in his art, he was harassed only by the troubles which his brilliant young son Pierre now began to bring into his life. Like the sons of so many great men, he was a conceited, arrogant, self-willed lad, full of dreams that never became a reality—troubling others, himself perhaps most of all. Winning in 1754 the *Prix de Rome*, and having completed his three years in the recently established *Ecole des élèves protégés*, the young fellow set out for Rome in October 1757.

Chardin, taking his apartments at the Louvre in 1757, let his house to JOSEPH VERNET, and in addition to his paintings of still-life—the Louvre *Débris d'un Déjeuner* was of 1763—he was soon given work upon the decorations of the royal palaces. In 1764 he worked upon the overdoors for the Château of Choisy, painting for them the *Science*, *Art*, and *Music* shown at the Salon of 1765; the following year he painted the *Civil Music* and *Military Music* of the overdoors of Bellevue. The affairs of the Academy were so bad in 1772 that its dissolution was only saved by Chardin's appeal to Marigny, through whom relief was granted by Terray. Meanwhile at Rome Chardin's son became idle, quarrelsome, and of no account. Coming back to Paris in 1762, he reappeared in his father's house a hopeless failure. Going to Venice in 1767 with the French Ambassador

XIII

CHARDIN

1699–1779

"LE BÉNÉDICITÉ"

(Grace before Meat)

(LOUVRE)

Several replicas are known, but the original is probably the version in the Hermitage Collection at St Petersburg. The Louvre owns two examples—one from the collection of Louis XV., another from the La Caze Collection. Another replica is in the Marcille Collection, and yet another at Stockholm.

he disappeared, finding rest at last, it is thought, in the waters. His death broke his father down. In 1772 Chardin was beginning to fail in body; he was heavily embarrassed by lack of money. The king's pensions were unpaid for several years. Chardin had to sell his house in the October of 1774.

WHEREIN, OUT OF THE KITCHEN, ENTERS INTO FRANCE ONE OF THE SUPREME PAINTERS OF ALL TIME

In 1774 Chardin's affairs went to the bad. And he was assailed by illness, suffering terribly. His office of treasurer was beyond his strength, and he resigned it on Christmas Day in this year to the sculptor Coustou. A small debt he offered to fulfil out of his own pocket; but his comrades refused to hear of it, and gave him a banquet instead.

The last years of Chardin were glorified by a splendid achievement, and not the least, in his career. He had almost given up painting owing to the weakness of his eyes and hand, when he found in pastels a new artistic life. The *Head of an Old Man*; a *Head of a Jockey* which he gave to Madame Victoire; his two immortal portraits of himself—*Chardin à l'abat-jour* and *Chardin aux besicles*—together with *Madame Chardin in Old Age*, place him amongst the supreme masters of pastel. Here he is as ever the consummate artist, using the pastel with supreme skill within the limits of its handling. He employs the coloured chalks with the vigour of youth, with the vision and skill of middle life. The critics alone did not realise the master-work that he was giving forth.

His last act at the Academy was to add his signature to the high praise written concerning the picture sent from Rome by the brilliant student of the Academy, Louis David.

He sent in this, the last and eightieth year of his life, several pastel heads to the Salon of 1779.

Chardin died on the 6th of December 1779, serene and courageously calm as during his illness; sane and clear-eyed and strong of will, with the philosophic simplicity of a Christian, with the decency and propriety in which he had lived. Insisting on shaving himself on the day of his death, he looked like his own last portrait of himself in pastels as he lay back and surrendered his noble soul to his God.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

They buried him at Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, where Boucher also sleeps. At his death his widow asked for relief, pleading that she was without the means of livelihood. But on inquiry into her case, she was found to possess an income of 6000 to 8000 livres.

Whether we look upon the superb *Still-life on a Table* at the Louvre, with its consummate massing of dish and tureen, pottery and decanters, preserve-jars and napkin, knife and spoon and the like upon the table, and the wondrous red of the little china-table in front; whether we turn to the deep resonances and astounding force of the *Woman drawing Water* at the National Gallery, or the superb painting called *The Skate* at the Louvre, or the exquisite *Grace before Meat* at the Hermitage, or *La Pourvoyeuse* at the Louvre, or the many superb creations of Chardin's hand—the marvellous *Bread and Butter on a Newspaper* at the National Gallery, and the like—the power of their statement and the glamour of the vision that beheld and the skill that recorded them, compels the memory and arouses the sense of the things seen. Chardin challenges rivalry with the Dutch, and wins to the supreme rank in his endeavour. He, like them, was of the people, and uttered his art for the people. Into that art no alien lisp ever enters. He does not hymn his whole age; but he utters the life of that part of the people from whom he came. It is only bookish criticism that seeks to raise Chardin by flinging contempt on the art of Boucher and of Fragonard. He gains nothing by such falsity. He could not and did not touch the lyre they tuned and played with astounding genius. He knew nothing of the upper classes of France, and cared nothing. He wrought the spirit of the age as they wrought it, with wondrous genius; but he took for his field of vision a different realm of that people. To speak of him as alone hymning France is fantastic. His utterance is wholly incomplete without theirs—theirs incomplete without his. His vision for values was intense and has never been surpassed; his sense of colour was masterly. This sense of values had been steadily

XIV

CHARDIN

1699 – 1779

"STILL-LIFE"

(Louvre)

growing in France, brought from the North. Largillière had it, and Desportes and Oudry sought it.

WHEREIN, OUT OF THE KITCHEN, ENTERS INTO FRANCE ONE OF THE SUPREME PAINTERS OF ALL TIME

It is the habit of bookish men to speak of Chardin as the one sincere note in an age that was wholly superficial and luxurious, given over to trivial things, its furniture and its life base and contemptible, *so different from the age of the great Renaissance in Italy.* The great Renaissance in Italy was steeped in a vileness, in vices, in a brutality, to which the weaknesses of eighteenth-century France were positive virtue. Rotten as was much in France, it was healthy compared with the corruption of Italy. Vice might step into the palace of the king, and a harlot govern the land; but in Italy murder and vice bespattered the very altars of the Most High at Rome. France stooped low enough. But she dared not have stooped to the iniquities of Italy; for her people had a nobler manhood, and would have torn the great ones to shreds long before, driven to utter shame, they eventually did it. And even whilst the privileged classes danced to the music of folly, there was a France growing to such strength throughout the century such as Renaissance Italy never knew, and of which she was wholly incapable. To sneer at the artistic development of France in these years is the foolishness of shallow minds. She was replacing the pompous halls of bombastic pretence, largely due to Italy, with the graciousness of the home. And much as Chardin deserves high honour for his utterance of the glorification of the homely, it was to the despised Boucher more than to any man of the age that the gracious home of the cultured classes is due. He fashioned it, wrought it, decorated it. Out of his genius was born the superb achievement of the greatest craftsmanship that ever adorned the home—the design of Chippendale and the furniture of England, a design compared with which the crafts of Italy were as pompous as a tomb, and as comfortless as a wheelbarrow.

The very critics who set the Dutch painters of still-life and of the life of the people down as "little masters" are precisely those who in the achievement of France to-day raise Chardin above his age. They cannot have it both ways.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

As a fact, all this business of comparison is veriest logic-chopping. Chardin went to life; and, like the poet he was, he essayed to utter life as he felt it, in the lowly home where he saw it, with all that power that he had been granted. His senses felt the wizardry of the wondrous mystery; and his hand's skill wrought it with consummate exquisiteness of touch, so that to-day he stands amongst the immortals, without need of condescension to any, one of the supreme painters of all time. For him is no need to filch the bays from other men of genius. He lived and wrought his art without rival in the field that he made his own. He learned much of his art from Watteau, and in his own realm he bettered his instruction.

CHAPTER XVII

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH A MIGHTY RIVALRY THAT DIVIDES THE TOWN, AND THE WINNING LEADS TO DEATH

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH A MIGHTY RIVALRY THAT DIVIDES THE TOWN, AND THE WINNING LEADS TO DEATH

THE decorative and historical painting of the pompous years of France under King Sun, born out of the bastard school of Fontainebleau, with Le Brun for its lord, was wearying France when old age came to the king. Through JOUVENET it descended to the insipidity of LOUIS DE BOULLOGNE; thence it became in Antoine Coypel a pallid thing. Then there entered Watteau, creating the spirit of the new age. Of the new men who caught the new spirit was FRANÇOIS LEMOYNE, or LEMOINE, or LE MOINE, steeped in the revelation of Watteau, with JEAN FRANÇOIS DE TROY for rival.

DE TROY
1679 – 1752

To the Academician and portrait-painter, FRANÇOIS DE TROY (1645-1730), was born at Paris, in 1679, his son JEAN FRANÇOIS DE TROY. Trained by his academic father, the lad rapidly developed his gifts, and had early put his schooling behind him, so that by fifteen he was fit to take the road to Rome that meant in his day the road to favour and fame. But the tall and handsome youth had cast that fascination over his father that he was to exert, his life long, over society. The old Academician could not part with his son, and would not, until a scandalous love affair of the young fellow's made the Italian journey the simplest way out of the trouble. De Troy's brilliant gifts and facility in their employment were wedded to a dandified life and easy ways, and it was fortunate for his career that his father had compelled him through the drudgery whilst scarce more than a boy. The year 1699, he being twenty, saw De Troy in Rome, which he took with the amused

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

and supercilious air that was the breath and pose of the gallant man of breeding of the age. However, his three years at Rome saw him steadily at work. The Naturalisti chiefly drew his homage, and above all Guercino. But his pose was the dandy and pleasure-seeker. His father, with astute eye to his career, now called him back to Paris, cutting down supplies. De Troy turned homewards, but went in languid fashion, moving leisurely in the lordly strut by way of Florence, sipping at pleasure, and winning all hearts. The father at last cut off all supplies; but De Troy fell back on the hospitality of the French envoy, and thereafter wandering to Pisa won the friendship of a rich man thereat, and lingered with him at Pisa for two years, honouring that worthy's house with his dandified presence, indulged in every whim and extravagance. He made love to an old judge's beautiful young wife; the old man, also fascinated by him, feeling honoured by the intrigue. So dawdling his way homewards he arrived at Paris at 1706. He began with historical painting, but soon turned to portraiture. In 1708, sending his *Niobe and her Children* as passport, he was accepted by the Academy, and within the year became a member. He was now giving his art to portraiture. In 1719 he was elected Professor of the Academy. Called as drawing-master into the home of the family of the Deslandes, he set his heart on capturing the heart—and wealth—of their nineteen-year-old daughter, who, won by his fascination and manner, became his adorer. De Troy married a tactful wife who was blind to his love affairs, and steered him out of scandals.

His easy-going, pleasure-loving nature was suddenly roused to energy by the rivalry of a younger painter, Lemoyne, as industrious as De Troy was indolent. In 1727 the king, to encourage the arts, offered a prize for a trial of strength amongst the Academicians. It became a fierce duel of skill between De Troy and Lemoyne. All Society took sides. The bewildered Academy divided the prize between the two men, satisfying neither. The king took Lemoyne into his favour. De Troy for several years now flung himself with a will at

decorative art, and painted thirty-two "over-doors" for M. de la Live as well as others for the banker Bernard. Everywhere he posed as the idle pleasure-seeker; but he got through a considerable amount of work. But he was hard put to it for livelihood, and he had expensive tastes and habits. He lit upon a somewhat shabby way out of the difficulty. Relying on his quick and facile gifts, he designed for the tapestries of the looms at Gobelins, and offered his work under the standard price. Thus he came to paint in 1737 his *History of Esther* and *Triumph of Mordecai.* The death of Lemoyne by his own hand in 1737 seemed to clear the way for De Troy to the office of First Painter to the King; but, freed by the death of his aged mother in 1738, he seized at the chance of leaving France for Rome as Director of the French Academy there. At Rome, the idol of a wide vogue, his art blossomed into further fulfilment; and he gave forth some of his best works. Finishing there his designs for the *History of Esther* for the Gobelins, he wrought the series of *Jason and Medea.* Idolised by Society, he was the idol also of the students under him. A man of liberal ideas, he held up to them high ideals in art. Grounding them on the antique, from which he urged them to take the spirit of beauty rather than to copy them slavishly, the tall, graceful, handsome fellow, chivalrous and courteous, won them with his friendliness and his innate dignity. He was elected Prince of the Academy of Saint Luke. Thereafter his star declined. Death took two of his sons in 1741; 1742 saw him lose his wife and remaining son. The loss of his wife was a serious blow to the man. She had, by her breeding and tact, added distinction to his social success; she had controlled his indiscretions and screened his excesses. He had in his way been deeply attached to her. Left to his own resources, he got into ridiculous positions; became embittered, and, falling into distaste for Rome, begged to be called back to Paris, only to find his recall ignored for years. In 1752, being seventy-four, the passionate, proud man became enamoured of a beautiful Roman girl; and she became to the melancholy,

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH A MIGHTY RIVALRY THAT DIVIDES THE TOWN, AND THE WINNING LEADS TO DEATH

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

soured man the one object of life. He was with her at the play when he heard that Natoire had arrived in Rome from Paris to take up his office. Angry and wounded, the proud old man lingered on at Rome, bewildered and brooding. At last he decided to take ship to France; but on the eve of embarkation he fell ill, and within the week he died.

That De Troy has suffered unmerited neglect is revealed by his finely designed little painting of *The Surprise* at South Kensington, his *Bathsheba* at Angers, the Chantilly *Déjeuner d'Huitres*, the Welbeck portrait of *Sylvia*, and the great *Plague at Marseilles*. When at his best his art is exquisite and his painting vigorous and telling; he saw life with remarkable truth, and his sense of arrangement was consummate. He reached to grandeur in his *Plague at Marseilles*. He varied his style to fit the impression. It was unfortunate for the art of France that he was not made "first painter to the king," for his virile powers would have done much to increase its achievement, and in the act he would himself have come to wider achievement. He is one of the painters of his age.

FRANÇOIS LEMOYNE

1688 – 1737

Born in Paris in 1688, at his father's death his mother gave the child François Lemoyne for stepfather the Academician TOURNIÈRES, a kindly man who encouraged the boy in his artistic bent, and taught him, then sent him at thirteen as pupil to GALLOCHE of the Academy. An intensely industrious child, he soon made his mark, winning the Grand Prix in 1711 at twenty-three, but had to wait until 1724 before he could go to Italy owing to war. Lemoyne's industry was not to be baulked; from 1711 he produced an enormous amount of work, and rapidly came to repute. In 1717 he took up the commission of an Amiens painter and set to work upon nine paintings for the Gardiens des Cordoliers, completing three in that year at Amiens, sending four from Paris three years thereafter. Meanwhile, in 1718, he had been elected to the

Academy, and for the two remaining pictures he asked an increased amount equal to what he had contracted to take for the whole. Lemoyne kept his two pictures.

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH A MIGHTY RIVALRY THAT DIVIDES THE TOWN, AND THE WINNING LEADS TO DEATH

He was now decorating the ceiling of the choir of the church of the Jacobins in the Faubourg St. Germains, heavily overworking himself and fretting at the delay over his journey to Italy, when, in 1724, a rich lover of art offered to take him with him. But Lemoyne's restless energy would only brook six months during which he did a vast amount of work, his chief worship being given to the Sistine Chapel and the paintings of Piero da Cortona and Lanfranco, but made no copies of pictures, painting instead views from Nature. He came back to Paris to an ever increasing-vogue; took little rest; went from the Jacobins to the cupola of the Chapel of the Virgin at St. Sulpice for three years' incessant toil—and over the business came into competition with the airy, idling De Troy. The king offered a prize of 1000 crowns to the Academy for the best historical painting, "to reanimate the arts." It was taken as a duel between De Troy and Lemoyne. The painters, the Court, Society took sides. The bewildered jury of Academicians divided the prize between the two men. Nobody was satisfied. The king thereafter cast his vote for Lemoyne, and for him he painted wholly without help at Versailles *Louis XV giving Peace to Europe*, and then his huge decorations of the Salon d'Hercule, his great achievement.

Lemoyne had married in 1730 the sister of the Academician Stiémart; in the midst of his unceasing toil upon the Salon d'Hercule she died, to his bitter grief. He grimly drowned that grief in increase of toil, working, when the daylight went, by lamplight. His four years' heavy labour done, the work was hailed at its ending in 1736 by the king and Court with enthusiasm. He got a pension, and was made First Painter to the King.

But Lemoyne rushed to further work. Suddenly something snapped. Putting his body and brain to overwork since a boy of thirteen, he broke down. Melancholy and black

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

suspicion fell upon him. He got it into his head that he was in danger of arrest. He would go about in terror of it. De Caylus was with him the night he finished the *Time Revealing Truth*, now at the Wallace. As De Caylus left him, Lemoyne asked his little cousin, Mademoiselle Lefranc, to sit with him. The next morning, having made his visit to his students with whom his kindness and helpfulness made him a favourite, he went to breakfast, and rising thereafter, took the girl's hand, bowed over it, and saying with a smile, "Allons, dansons," left the room and shut himself into his bedroom. A little later, Berger, who had an appointment with him, knocked at his door, only to be answered by groans. After repeated knockings, followed by appeals, the door was opened; the life was ebbing from Lemoyne from five self-inflicted wounds with his sword.

Neglect fell on his once highly reputed art; but Lemoyne was a fine artist. He gave to France the blithe and rosy atmosphere that his pupil Boucher wrought thereafter with genius throughout his wonderful career. The Wallace is rich in him.

Watteau had lighted the flame; De Troy and Lemoyne carried it into that realm of decoration that they were to hand on to fulfilment in the genius of Boucher and Fragonard. The old gods were dead; a fresh wind blew over France, and a new art arose in the land. Lemoyne had brought the spirit of Watteau's *fêtes galantes* into "grand painting." He pushed wider open the door that Watteau had unlocked to France. Rubens and Flanders have triumphed over Italy.

RESTOUT

1692 – 1768

Pupil and nephew to Jean Jouvenet, JEAN RESTOUT painted huge canvases—altarpieces, ceilings, and tapestry designs. His masterpiece is the *Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne* at Potsdam, painted for Frederick the Great.

CHAPTER XVIII

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

NATOIRE
1700 - 1777

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

NATOIRE, the eldest pupil of Lemoyne, and with a fine opinion of himself, had looked to succeed him, as did De Troy. But Boucher and La Tour both came to the front the year that Lemoyne slew himself; and De Troy and Natoire soon realised that the tide had passed them by—De Troy first, for he betook himself to Rome the next year; but Natoire, though he hung on in hope for some years thereafter, at last saw that the young Boucher and Carle van Loo were passing him. The Louvre has a fine *Three Graces* by him. He was a born decorator. But his careless drawing grew upon him, and he lost colour-sense. The looms of Beauvais or Gobelins carried out his series of *Don Quixote*. He hoped on for the office of First Painter to the King, until the blow came of the appointment of Charles Antoine Coypel in 1747. De Troy, meanwhile, threatened to give up his post at Rome, thinking he would be given rooms at the Louvre and the high office of First Painter; baulked by Coypel, he now aroused the ill-will of Marigny, since become Marquis de Vandières, who accepted his resignation, and set Natoire in his place. Natoire arrived in Rome, in the November of 1751, to supersede De Troy, and proceeded to neglect the French school in Rome; his hopes of being recalled were scarce helped by his pouring forth a vast number of insipid works, for which he found an easy sale. He at last retired to Castel Gandolfo, where he died in 1777.

He taught Vien, the first of the neo-classics, who in turn trained David. His going to Rome left the field free for Boucher and Van Loo.

A HISTORY

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

CARLE VAN LOO
1705 – 1765

As we have seen, the duel for the high office of First Painter to the King between Lemoyne and De Troy left Lemoyne victor. Whether De Troy's proud nature were irked by the prospect of stepping into the shoes of his dead conqueror, or whatsoever the reason, he eagerly looked to leaving France for Rome. The fruit seemed thereby suddenly to be within the reach of Natoire for the plucking; but he was baulked by the king's choice of Charles Antoine Coypel, who was made First Painter in 1747, exactly ten years after Lemoyne took his own life. Coypel held the post for five years, dying in 1752. Natoire, like De Troy, on the death of his successful rival, turned his eyes to Rome, where he arrived to take his office from De Troy. The new rivalry was to be no bitter one; Boucher and Carle van Loo were on friendly terms, and Boucher was a kindly, generous-hearted man. Van Loo was of orderly life and punctual in business; Boucher was scarce a model of the moralities. The Academy and the king affected the Respectable. Louis XV's purse had gained by ten years' lack of pension to be paid after Lemoyne's death, and he now took another ten years to decide as to who was fit to be his next First Painter. In 1762 he raised Van Loo to the office. When Van Loo thanked the king, the Dauphin asked him not to say anything more about it, "since you have been First Painter for so long."

The Van Loos were from Flanders. JEAN BAPTISTE VAN Loo, born at Aix in 1684, became a fine artist. But he had the roving habit which checked him in coming to a larger repute than that to which he won. His younger brother CARLE VAN LOO (or CHARLES ANDRÉ VAN LOO), twenty-one years his junior, was born at Nice in 1705, and was said to have passed through the siege of Aix in a cradle down a cellar. A child of nine, he was taken to Rome by his brother, who there sent him into the studio of Luti the painter, and of

Legros the sculptor, with whom he was when Legros died in 1719. Thence, at fourteen, the lad went with his brother to Paris, with their patron the Prince de Carignan, into whose great house they were taken. Young Carle, cared for and watched over by his brother, whose assistant he thenceforth became, rapidly developed his powers, and in 1724, in his nineteenth year, he carried off the Prix de Rome. For the next three years his heavy work as assistant to his brother, and his own rapidly increasing vogue, kept him busily employed. In 1727, in company with Boucher and Michel, he made for Rome, where he greatly added to his laurels, working in Italy for three years. From Italy he went to Toulon to paint for the Duke of Savoy, and there married the singer Christine Sommis, who brought the Italian style of singing into France. By 1734 he was again with his brother, assisting in restoring the works of Primaticcio at Fontainebleau.

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

It will be remembered that Lemoyne was then at work at Versailles upon his prodigious task of painting the Salon d'Hercule, which he completed in 1736, being made First Painter to the King. These works, and their markedly new style, as well as their impression upon the King and Court, were not lost upon Carle van Loo, who was influenced thereby. His repute in the Academy was growing every year. Carle van Loo realised that the new style must be employed with restraint; saw that Boucher, who carried on and developed Lemoyne's fine revelation, was not as highly considered by the Academy as Coypel—and the election of Coypel to First Painter in 1747 pronounced the fact. Van Loo was not slow to take the hint, and straightway made for the middle path between the two. He took every pains to win the good opinion of the Academy the while. In 1750 he was made Chevalier de St. Michel. To the sneers of the David faction he paid no heed—they who coined the verb "vanloter" for facile insincerity.

In his famous *Hunt Breakfast* at the Louvre he stepped from the chilly heights of Olympus and its frozen gods into

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

the realm of Versailles; but his homage to Watteau and Boucher is careful enough. He has the genius of neither. To Boucher he owed also a French attitude towards mythology, but here also he toned the ardour of Boucher with the chill tradition of the Academics, and wooed now Guido Reni, now Raphael, now Correggio.

This peasant, who could neither read nor write, who was notorious as a dull fellow when he dined out, rough and boorish of utterance, was esteemed and loved by all. The honest fellow was happiest and most deeply loved in his own home, where the chief pride of his life was his beautiful daughter Caroline, who had inherited her mother's gifts as a singer. She was Van Loo's constant companion and comrade, reading to him whilst he worked. She was the critic to whom he paid attention. To the man's bitter grief the girl fell into a decline, and took to brooding, languor gaining possession of her. As the girl sank, he watched by her bed, day and night, "praying for the first time in his life," torn by her delirium. Thereafter he always wore black.

Carle van Loo won to wide repute in his day. Often offered, he always refused to be ennobled. "Carle van Loo, c'est assez," said he.

When Coypel died in 1752, Carle van Loo realised his chance of becoming First Painter to the King—Boucher alone stood in the way. For ten years he had to wait for the chief honour of his calling. In 1762 he won the coveted prize. But he was to bear his high honours for only three short years. He fell dead in 1765.

BOUCHER

1703 – 1770

The revelation of herself to France from the north, vouchsafed through the genius of Watteau, was handed on to Lemoyne and his fellows in the realm of the decorative arts, whilst Chardin caught up the Flemish flame and illumined with it in consummate fashion the life of the more homely France of the sincere "lower classes." In Lemoyne and his fellows the revela-

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

tion of Watteau seemed to be on the road to dissipation when there arose one who was to bring his wayward genius to the utterance of the life of the cultured and the so-called great, and to give forth the statement of it in unforgettable fashion.

It is usual with critics to speak of Boucher with apology. He again needs none. The critics who attack him lack a sense of the significance of art; they judge him by bookish theories and weigh his genius by standards of morality and the like, which would condemn the art of many men of genius whom their cant approves. They condemn him for the very fact upon which his whole genius is founded—on which the genius of all great art is founded—in that he uttered his age. Had Boucher shown France in the spirit of Michelangelo or Velazquez or Frans Hals, he would have been a confessed liar, and no artist. But—and this is beyond the grasp of Criticism, which seeks its authority in the printed words of bookish men instead of going to the significance of art—Boucher created the charm and fascination of the home for his cultured race. Out of his design grew the decorations, the furnishments, the tapestries, the forms of the boudoir and the living-rooms of the well-to-do, and out of France he came influencing the English design, so that largely due to him is the impulse that brought forth the delight of the English home, chastened by the more severe and simpler spirit of our race, infecting the genius of Chippendale and the great household designers of the age. To him is largely due those suave, graceful, and happy forms that make the furniture of the English mahogany age the finest that the world has seen. The influence of Boucher on the fascinating design of the seventeen-hundreds throughout Europe was prodigious. And he stands out as one of the supreme decorative artists of all time. These same bookish men again are wont to speak of his pupil and imitator, Fragonard, as a greater genius. Fragonard was a man of genius, but his art was founded on the art of Boucher, and his achievement was parochial compared with the wide genius of his master. Boucher is the supreme exponent of his age, and dominates that age.

A HISTORY

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

That writers upon art should seek in the art of Boucher for what Boucher never sought to utter, and thereupon condemn him as artist, is only a part of the futility of written criticism. Boucher's genius is above the attacks of these gentry, from the clamant demand of Diderot that his infants are culpable in that they do not "pick hemp," to the fatuous "criticism" of a recent writer who denies him genius because he is unfit for the home, "where," as he egregiously puts it, "no sort of brilliance can dazzle long enough beautifully to clothe, in golden haze, the animal."

I

A year after the good Queen Anne came to rule over us, Louis the Fourteenth being still King of France, and Watteau still turning out his paintings of St. Nicholas by the score, on the 29th of the September of 1703 there was born to a mediocre painter of Paris, one Nicolas Boucher and his wife Elizabeth Lemesle, their first child, a son, whom they christened FRANÇOIS BOUCHER. The godparents at the baptism were the tipstaff to the king's palace, one François Prévost, and Mademoiselle Boullenois, daughter to a law-officer of the police-court.

The child was born into a Paris agog with stirring news. Well might heads be shaken solemnly, for was not godfather Prévost tipstaff to the king's majesty, therefore in the whirl of things? The French arms were coming to know defeat. Europe was one great armed camp. France was suffering terrible blood-letting. Defeat on defeat. These were sorry times indeed. All went wrong. Good generals were set aside; intriguing good-for-nothings led the veterans into disaster. . . . Then the womenfolk, bored with high politics, played with the newly baptized little one, vowed it a born scamp, since born on a Saturday; and, with elaborate courtesies and tappings on snuff-boxes, farewells were said to the good priest, and the little burgess folk strolled off to the modest

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

little home of the Bouchers in the Rue de Verrerie to a glass of wine and compliments and banter. . . .

The sun of the Grand Monarque was setting. Louis XIV was nearing the end of his long lease of splendour. Little François Boucher was not a month old when Admiral Rooke whipped Chateau-Renaud of the high seas, destroying the French and Spanish fleets in Vigo Bay, and carrying off some millions of pieces of eight from the galleons. The child's first year saw the English troopers ride down the French at Blenheim—a day that made "Malbrook" a name of dread to every child in the land, a name to frighten into good behaviour. To the little fellow's home came the name of Ramillies, horror-spoken; then of Oudenarde; then of Lille. To his six-year-old ears the terrible news of Malplaquet.

But there was Paris a-bellringing in his ears at seven; for there was born to the king's grandson a sickly child who was to succeed King Sun as Louis the Fifteenth; and François Boucher is one day to step from his modest home and stand nearer at this child's side than the Rue de Verrerie thinks. The boy Boucher, at sturdy twelve, heard of the death of the old king; and François Boucher was to spend his youth and grow to manhood under the regency of the dissolute but brilliant Orléans.

Nicolas Boucher, the father, an obscure, honest fellow, given to the *trade* of art, "an inferior designer, little favoured by fortune," having schooled the boy, sent him to the studio of Lemoyne, rapidly becoming famous—he who painted the ceilings at Versailles with gods and goddesses in handsome fashion. Lemoyne, founding his Watteauesque art on that of Correggio and Veronese, had rid himself of the academic vogue, and was painting in sound French; the youth Boucher, with the quick gift of rapidly making his own what he wanted to acquire and rejecting what he did not, picked up from Lemoyne at once a French way of painting in a large, broad, decorative manner, and thereby escaped the long drudgery to Italian models which his master had had to suffer before

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

becoming free. The youth of seventeen made Lemoyne's art his own in a few weeks; and, on the edge of manhood, he so rivalled his master that it is dangerous to attribute a picture of this period to the master or pupil without most careful evidence. Yet the youth was but three months with Lemoyne, who had just then scant time to give to his pupils, spending his whole energy upon his unceasing labour on his masterpieces; but Boucher was a prodigious worker, with a passionate love of his art—he had the quick and alert hand and eye, and was early free of the hesitances of the student. Daring in experiment, the wish to achieve a thing meant for Boucher the setting to work to achieve it; and he rested neither night nor day until he mastered that which he had set out to do. He stepped out of Lemoyne's studio a finished artist, a sound painter, endowed with the craftsmanship that it had taken his master his life to learn. To the end of his days he held the art of Lemoyne in deep reverence. At the height of his fame he was asked to finish a picture by Lemoyne. "Such works are sacred vessels to me," said he; "I should dread to profane them by touching them." Lemoyne returned his pupil's admiration; looking upon a *Judgment of Susannah* painted by the young fellow whilst in the master's studio, Lemoyne, standing amazed before it, burst into prophecy of Boucher's future greatness. From Lemoyne's studio the youth went to that of Lemoyne's friend, "Père Cars," the engraver, whose son, Laurent Cars, was Boucher's intimate friend. The engraver engaged Boucher to design drawings for his engravers, giving him in return his food and lodging with sixty livres (double-florins) a month—and Boucher accounted his fortune made. The cheery youth went at his work with energy and enthusiasm, gaily putting his hand to anything that was wanted of him, bringing invention and style to all he did—tailpieces emblems, coats-of-arms, communion-cards, initial letters, anything. But he was soon making important designs for engravings. He searched out publishers of books and worked for them. Thus and otherwise he filled his scanty purse—that needed constant filling, for he

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

was quick at its emptying, being of a free hand and generous habits, and a dandy to boot. And hard as he worked so did he play. And all the while he was taking part in the student's competitions for the Academy.

It was in Boucher's nineteenth year that, in this same Paris, in the house of one of its rich families, was born a little girl-child who was to come into Boucher's life in after years. The father, a financial fellow, one Poisson, was a man of shady repute; indeed he was in banishment for mishandling the public moneys at the time of the birth of the little girl-child, christened Jeanne Antoinette Poisson—destined to be the Jane Fish of the scurrilous street-songs of the years to come. But the careless student knew nothing of it as yet, nor that destiny had put into the pretty child's cradle the sceptre and diadem of France as plaything. Boucher, on the eve of manhood, took as little heed of the child's coming as did the thirteen-year-old lad who sat as king upon the throne, and who, in little Jane Poisson's first year, was declared to be of man's estate and ruler of France, no longer requiring Regent Orléans to govern for him. It was in this his nineteenth year that Boucher carried off the first prize at the Academy with his picture painted to the appointed subject of *Evilmerodach, son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar, delivering Joachim from chains, in which his father had for long held him.* The title reveals the cast-iron ideal to which the youth had to bend his originality. This success sent the collectors buying the works of the brilliant youngster. But Boucher needed no paying orders to make him work. He painted for sheer love of the thing, declaring his "studio his church," and eagerly seeking to spread the repute of his art abroad. His fame grew apace. He caught at every chance of display, even hanging his pictures on the tapestries and carpets along the Place Dauphin and the Pont Neuf during the procession of the Fête-Dieu in the "Exposition de la Jeunesse."

There was that which happened about this time that was to have supreme influence on his art. Watteau had lately

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

died, and his loyal friend and patron De Julienne was publishing his famous book to Watteau's memory; he came to "Père Cars," and Boucher was asked to engrave one hundred and twenty-five of the plates after the dead master. Watteau revealed the French genius to the young Boucher, and set aflame the art of the man. Boucher was to become his great inheritor. Boucher came into a France no longer haunted by the dead reign that was past; the 'tween-light mood of France was gone, and a gay, blithe, reckless France was in full swing. Boucher, who never had the lyric sense of the poetic that was the exquisite dower of Watteau, developed the decorative qualities and the style that no one else seemed to have the gifts to develop; and he was to bring them into a wider and larger application to the life of the day. The France that Boucher knew was a more superficial France, a more rollicking and reckless France.

His engravings from Watteau, done with all the fiery zeal and rapid facility of the eager artist, the moment came when he was bound to make the Italian journey; and to Rome he went with Carle van Loo and Carle's two nephews, François and Louis van Loo. Of Boucher's wander-years in Italy little is known. A frank and honest man, he had scant interest in the accepted standards of the schools and the critics; and he had the independence of character to say so. He found Michelangelo "contorted," Raphael "insipid," and Carracci "gloomy"—just as Velazquez had found them alien. Like Velazquez, he was drawn only to such artists as were to his taste, and he had the unforgivable courage to say so. However, whether idle from ill-health or not, he appeared in Paris again in three years with a large number of religious pictures to his credit—pictures hailed by the Academy and by the critics for their beauty, their pose, and their virility; pictures which, happily for his repute, hang in galleries under other names or have vanished. Here we see Boucher grimly putting aside his own taste and aims in art, and doggedly bending his will and hand to a prodigious effort to win the repute of a "serious

painter," his only hope of academic honours; and he won them, for, in his twenty-eighth year, on his return to Paris, he was "nominated" to the Academy, and had but to present an historical painting to take his seat as Academician.

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

Back in his beloved Paris again, thrilled by the atmosphere and merry life; in the full vigour of manhood; amongst congenial friends; done with the drudgery of winning to academic honours, Boucher saw that the public were not scrambling for religious or historic pictures; straightway turned his back upon these things, and, on the edge of his thirtieth year, he painted his *Marriage of the Children of God with the Children of Men*, in which Venus is his avowed goddess. His reputation enormously increased. His Italian schooling was at an end, Boucher struck his own personal note. The influence of Lemoyne is still seen, as also in his *Venus asking Arms for Aeneas from Vulcan*, his *Birth of Adonis* and *Death of Adonis*—indeed, both the Adonis pictures hung for long as works by Lemoyne until the signature was discovered. But in the Venus is already seen that exquisite flesh-painting of the nude, the rosy touch, and the subtle sense of femininity, that are the sign-manual of Boucher.

The Salons being closed until Boucher was thirty-four, the record of these years is difficult. But Venus was now his adoration; and his Venus-pieces steadily flow from his genius. He came to her service rid of all 'prentice essays in craftsmanship, a finished and consummate artist. He found in his subject a goddess who brought forth all his splendid gifts. He painted her dainty body with radiant delight and a rare colour-sense such as France had not before known. He remains to this day the first painter of the subtle, delicate, and elusive thing that is femininity; he caught her allure, her charm, as he was to catch the fragrance and charm of children and of flowers; and he set the statement of these things upon canvas as they had never been uttered. To Boucher the allure of women was the most fascinating fact in Nature; and he bore witness to that allure with remarkable power. He did not

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

seek to make it a pompously dignified thing, nor a vague hunger of poetic abstraction; he loved the forms of women with a healthy Rabelaisian gusto, and he shrank from no shyness in stating it. He was an artist, not a moralist; far less a hypocrite. And if he loved woman overwell, at heart he was but human. Smug criticism sees in all his art the lust of one who loved lightly; but if we are to judge an artist by his life instead of by his art, the vaunted Italians must come to a different reckoning in smug criticism's estimate than they hold to-day.

All his life long, Boucher gave himself feverishly to work and to pleasure—often working at his easel for twelve hours at a stretch. Out of his splendid toil he made the means to indulge his tastes for pleasure; and his pleasures renewed the ideas that inspired his artistry. His vast labour was one long delight—his pleasures a riot of industry in their pursuit. He played as he toiled, scarce knowing which was play and which toil. The gossip of his love affairs makes no romantic reading—they were but commonplace ecstacies with unknown frailty. In his thirtieth year he married the pretty seventeen-year-old Marie Jeanne Buseau, a little Parisian, and for love of her, for she brought him no dowry. Madame was a pretty creature, as La Tour's pastel proves, and she sat often to her lord for the shapely body of Psyche. But marriage did not turn Boucher's gadding heart to a single love; and Madame, who had the tact to make her home a happy one, amused herself—amongst others with the Swedish Ambassador, Count de Tessin. Boucher's wife herself worked in the studio, gaining some fame as miniaturist and engraver.

Two years being flown since his nomination to the Academy, Boucher had now to paint the formal Historical Picture and present it; and in this his thirtieth year he painted the *Renauld et Armide*, now at the Louvre, hailed by the Academy and the critics, Diderot amongst them, with enthusiasm. Even here the Cupids peep about the mythologies, and Armide herself has pretty French lips that never knew Greek.

OF PAINTING

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

Once secure of his seat at the Academy, Boucher straightway flung the academic ideals out of his studio-door, and uttered his own age. And it is a grim comment on criticism, both in his own day and ours, that exactly as he uttered his genius in a personal and original art, so exactly was he attacked!

His election to the Academy, and the enthusiasm of the critics, won him the favour of the Court; the following year he painted his first pictures for the king, whose painter he was destined to become. The decorations in the queen's apartments being grown blackened, he painted in their stead the *Charity*, *Abundance*, *Fidelity* and *Prudence*, there still to be seen. With his gay vision, his habit of culling only the pretty flowers from the garden of life, and his flare for pleasing prospects, Boucher was predestined painter to a Court weary of the mock-heroic, and given over to pleasure and the elegances. He also found time to design the illustrations for the *Works of Molière*; and just as he saw the gods of Olympus as the French of his own age, so also he drew the characters of Molière arrayed in his own age.

The Homely had come upon the town out of Holland, painted with consummate art by Chardin; and Boucher, ever quick to catch the mode, set himself to paint *La Belle Cuisinière*. He came to a subject, the life of the people, wholly out of his understanding. Boucher never displayed the northern gift of feeling for character, and he fully deserved the waggery against him that his very broomsticks called for pompons and ribbons. He proves himself more concerned with the accident of the kissing of a kitchenmaid than with the kitchen's habit; he cannot even peep into the scullery without dragging in Venus by the skirts, if tricked out in the property-wardrobe of a scullery-wench.

However, these toyings with passing vogues were but gay asides. He was painting hard. His two famous pictures of infants, *L'Amour Oiseleur* and *L'Amour Moissonneur*, bring that host of Cupids into his studio that were to frolic across his

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

canvases and join the retinue of Venus, peeping out from clouds, over waves, round curtains, painted with a perfection that has made his infants immortal. He painted their round limbs, their lusty life, their delightful awkwardnesess, their jolly fat grace, their naïve surprise at life and their glory in it, as they had never been painted before, and have never been painted since.

He also gave forth in his thirty-third year a *Pastoral* and a *Shepherd and Shepherdess in Conversation*, with sheep about them in a landscape, which were his first essays in the style that he created and which made him famous.

His friend Meissonnier, of rococo fame, stood godfather to Boucher's first-born son in the May of 1736.

From the beginning, Boucher was engraved, and his art thereby widely extended and made popular. In his thirty-third year he published his well-known *Cries of Paris*, in which we see his failure to utter the life of the people, and there is revealed the utter gulf that separated the well-to-do French from the millions of France. He caught only the dainty atmosphere that comes floating up to the windows on a fresh morning in Paris from the musical cries of the street-vendors; but of the deeper significance of the street-sellers—of the tragic accent in their lives, of their weariness of toil—he knew nothing and cared less. His brush could only make Elegance peep from behind the porter's fustian or the milkmaid's skirt.

But his thirty-third year was to hold a more far-reaching significance even than the creation of his Cupid-pieces and pastorals. He had published an illustration to *Don Quixote*. Oudry at Beauvais straightway called him to the designing of tapestries; and Boucher's fresh and original decorative gifts, his sense of blithe colour and arrangement, and his enthusiasm, at once increased the reputation of the products of the famous looms. It brought forth his great decorative genius. Thenceforth he played a supreme part in the history of the great factories, producing painting after painting for the Beauvais looms.

XV

BOUCHER

1703 – 1770

"PASTORAL"

(Louvre)

All was now one long triumph for Boucher, broken only in this year by the blow of the suicide of his old master Lemoyne. It was in this, his thirty-fourth year, that the Salon was opened for the first time since Boucher's infancy; and it held several canvases by him. That Salon pronounced the birth of a new France.

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

II

At thirty-five Boucher had arrived. In the vogue, in favour at Court, during the three years from taking his seat at the Academy he had created a new style—his Cupid-pieces, his pastorals, his Venus-pieces; and he had completed the style for tapestries begun by Watteau's genius. His kingdom lay in the realm of the decorative painter, and he had found it. He had rid France of an overwhelming load of art wholly alien to her, and brought forth a decoration that is native to her genius. Torn from their surroundings, and set up in an alien land and an alien age, his art is as out of place as an Italian altarpiece over a carving table in an English dining-room. Several may still be seen as he set them up in frames of his own planning, as overdoors to the palace of the Soubise, now given up to the national archives. The ghost of the Prince of Soubise may haunt his palace, but his kin know the place no more; the overdoors wrought by Boucher's skill, the *Three Graces enchaining Love*, the fine pastorals of *The Cage* and the *Shepherd placing a Rose in his Shepherdess's Hair*, were to look down upon a mightier change than the usurpation of King Sun's pompous age by the Elegancies.

A close friend of La Tour, who sent a portrait of Boucher's wife to the Salon of this time, Boucher played awhile with pastel with exquisite skill. He was also developing to its full powers his innate sense of landscape, raising to high achievement that rare balance of landscape with the figures in his design in which he has never been surpassed—his figures do not over-ride his landscape, nor his landscapes overpower his figures. He constantly urged the study of landscape on his

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

pupils, and was for ever deploring the lack of the landscape art in France.

The designing of a frontispiece for the catalogue of his friend Gersaint, a merchant of Oriental wares, started Boucher in his thirty-third year upon that series of Chinese subjects known as *Chinoiseries*, in which he, like Watteau, frittered away many precious hours. They set up a vogue. At Besançon are still the paintings of Boucher's *Chinoiseries* for the Beauvais looms.

Busy as were his brain and hand in the exercise of his wide and versatile gifts, illustrations for books, tapestries, landscapes, models for the gilt bronze decorations of porcelain vases, handsome designs for picture-frames, furniture, fans — Boucher painted his famous *Bath of Venus*, now at Stockholm. In the April of 1742, the last year of his thirties, Boucher received a royal pension—the year of his fine *Diana leaving the Bath with one of her Companions*, that won Whistler's homage, and now at the Louvre. It was also the year of his landscape, the *Hamlet of Issé*, which was to be enlarged for the Opera, of which he was now the art director.

At forty Boucher has come into his kingdom. The ten years of these forties were to be a vast triumph for him. His art had caught the taste of the day, and dominated the whole achievement of the time. His art and that of Chardin utter the mid-century. We have a picture of him as he was in the flesh at this time—a pastel portrait by Lundberg, now at the Louvre—a gay, somewhat dissipated, handsomely dressed dandy of the time, smiling out of his careless day, the debonnair man of fashion, the laughing eyes showing signs of the night carousals which were the rest from the prodigious toil of this eager spirit.

It was in Boucher's fortieth year that the gifted old Cardinal Fleury, who had guided the fortunes of France with rare skill during the young king's reign, died, broken by his ninety years and the blunders of the disastrous war that he had so strenuously opposed. Louis, essaying the strut of kingship, became king by

XVI

BOUCHER

1703 – 1770

"DIANA LEAVING THE BATH WITH ONE OF HER COMPANIONS"

(Louvre)

act. His indolent character unequal to the mighty business, his indeterminate will fretted by the set of quarrelsome, intriguing rogues that he gathered about him as his ministers, he fell into the habit that became his henceforth, the only thing to which he paid the tribute of constancy—he ruled France from behind pretty petticoats. He had early shown the adulterous blood of his great-grandfather; three sisters of the noble and historic house of De Nesle had yielded to his gadding fancy; the youngest now ousted her sister De Mailly from the king's favour, was publicly acknowledged as the king's mistress, and became Duchess of Châteauroux. Boucher painted her handsome being as a shepherdess in one of his pastorals. But the Châteauroux was no ordinary toy of a king; a woman of talent, with hot ambition for the king's majesty, fired with the pride of race of the old noblesse of France, it was during her short years of ascendancy over the king that he roused from his body's torpor and made an effort to reach to the dignity and eminence befitting the lord of a great and gallant people. He stepped forth awhile from his drunken bouts and manifold mean adulteries, and set himself at the head of the army in Flanders, strutting it as conqueror. The Châteauroux had to fight a duel that never ended with the king's witty, crafty, and scurrilous prime minister, the notorious Maurepas, for possession of the king's will; and Maurepas knew no mercy, no decency, no chivalry, no scruple.

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

Out of the whirl of things, Boucher's fortune was ripening. He was painting masterpiece after masterpiece. To his fortieth year belong the famous *Birth of Venus*, the *Venus leaving the Bath*, the *Muse Clio*, the *Muse Melpomene*, and the well-known pastorals now at the Louvre—*The Sleeping Shepherdess*, the *Nest*, and the *Shepherd and Shepherdesses*. Of the many famous Venus-pieces of these years was the *Marriage of Love and Psyche*. He also turned to the Dutch vogue for the home-life, and his *Déjeuner* is of this time. All went well with Boucher. He changes his home to better quarters, even though his eyes are on the keenly desired apartments at the Louvre. In 1744 Boucher created a new fashion at the Salon by sending studies and

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

sketches. Towards the end of the next, his forty-second year, the Swedish Ambassador, on the eve of departure from Paris, ordered four pictures of the Day of a Woman of Fashion, and Boucher painted his *Morning* for him, now known as the *Marchande de Modes*; the *Midday*, *Evening*, and *Night* were painted later, and had a wide vogue as engravings.

Poor Châteauroux saw that Maurepas was separating her from the king, and she, too, joined him at the head of the army, to the scandal of the people. Then small-pox fell upon the king at Metz, and the Châteauroux was sent packing by the priests. The king recovered, entered Paris in triumph as "The Well Beloved," and sent for Châteauroux, only to find her dying —suspected of being poisoned by Maurepas.

But this year of 1745 brings whisper of a mightier scandal to France—and it is to mean much for Boucher as well as France.

A young bride had become the gossip of the rich merchant society of Paris—the class that was thrusting the old noblesse from power. She was a beautiful, a remarkable woman; her wit was repeated; she had all the accomplishments; her charming name—Madame Lenormant d'Etioles.

Draw aside the curtains of the past, and she stands revealed as our little Jeanne Poisson, grown into this radiant creature. It has all come about in strange fashion enough. The father, banished for mishandling the public moneys; the mother no better than she need be; the wags wink knowingly towards the handsome and rich man of fashion, Monsieur Lenormant de Tournehem, who has been the favoured gallant at the house during the absence of the light-fingered Poisson. And, of a truth, the gallant takes astonishing interest in the little Jeanne —watches over her upbringing, gives her the best education at the convent, where she wins all hearts. Complacent Poussin comes home and takes the rich gallant to his arms—indeed, has he not wealth and estates? Jeanne leaves the convent to be taught all the accomplishments by the supreme masters of France. The wits foregather at Madame Poussin's. Jeanne is

soon the goddess of the circle—has the most exquisite taste in dress—and under all a heart cold as steel, calculating as the higher mathematics. She has but one hindrance to ambition—her mean name, her mean birth. Lenormant de Tournehem rids her of even this slur by making his nephew Lenormant d'Etioles marry her, and gives the young couple half his fortune for dowry, and the promise of the rest—hands them over a splendid town-house and as splendid a country-seat. So Jane Fish appears as Madame Lenormant d'Etioles, seductive, beautiful, accomplished, drawing to her house the New Philosophy, the wits, the artists. She had a certain sense of virtue; indeed openly vows that no one but the king shall ever come between her and her lord. But deep in her heart she has decided that the king shall help her keep her troth. She puts forth all her gifts, all her powers, to win to the strange goal; confides it to her worldly mother and "uncle" Lenormant de Tournehem, and finds keen allies there. The death of the Châteauroux clears the way. At a masked ball the king is intrigued as to the personality of a beautiful woman who plagues him; he orders the unmasking; Madame Lenormant d'Etioles stands revealed, drops her handkerchief as by accident—the whisper runs through the Court, "the handkerchief has been thrown!"—the king stoops and picks it up. A few evenings later she is smuggled into the "private apartments." She goes again a month later; in the morning is seized with sudden terror of her angry lord. The king is touched; allows her to hide thenceforth in the secret apartments; promises her a lodging, her husband's banishment, and early acknowledgment as titular mistress—before the whole Court at Easter, says the pious Great One. But he has to join the army first to play the conqueror at Fontenoy; and it is September before Madame d'Etioles is presented to the Court in a vast company and proceeds to the queen's apartments to kiss hands on appointment as the king's mistress. Thus was Jeanne Poisson raised to the great aristocracy of France in her twenty-third year as Marquise de Pompadour.

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

Boucher had been one of the brilliant group of artists in the d'Etioles' circle. The Pompadour had to fight Maurepas and the queen's party for the king's will, and had scant time for awhile to favour her painter. Boucher was already painting for the Court. But soon the Pompadour was directing the king's taste, and Boucher was in high favour. Lenormant de Tournehem was made Director-General of Buildings. Henceforth Boucher paints no more for the queen and Dauphin. He was now at work on his *Rape of Europa*, painted in competition with nine other Academicians at the king's order. Boucher won the goodwill of his brother painters by proposing that all should share the award. But the critics were beginning to murmur at his "abuse of rose tints" in the painting of the nude. Diderot and the men of the New Philosophy were beginning to inquire into the whole foundations of French life, and were demanding of art "grandeur and morality in its subjects," clamouring for "the statement of a great maxim, a lesson for the spectator," as the aim of art. And Diderot, with bull-like courage, picked out the greatest for attack, and fell upon Boucher, blaming him for triviality. But then, Diderot and the rest of the scribblers were attacking Chardin as well!

The nations, weary of war, concluded the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748. No sooner was peace come again than Louis relapsed into indolent and profligate ease. He allowed the Pompadour to usurp his magnificence and to rule over the land, yielding himself utterly, if sometimes sulkily, to her domination; and for sixteen years she was the most powerful person at Court and in the State—making and unmaking ministers, disposing of office, honours, titles, pensions. All political affairs were discussed and arranged under her guidance; the prizes of the State, of the Church, of the Army, of the Magistracy could be obtained solely through her favour and goodwill. Of prodigious energy, extraordinary talents, exquisite taste, she gave reign to her desires, and it was in the indulgence of her better qualities that she became the patron and pupil of Boucher.

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

But this, the Pompadour's sovereignty over the king, easy and light in its outward seeming, was a haggard nightmare to the calculating woman who had so longed for it. She knew no single hour's rest from the night she won to the king's bed. She had to fight her enemies, secret and open, for possession of the king's will, day and night; and she fought—with rare courage. She won by consummate skill and a cold heart that never forgot or forgave an enemy. She made herself a smiling and essential part of the king's freedom from care. The queen's party fought her for power with constant vigilance. Maurepas brought all his unscrupulous art, all his ironic mimicry, all his vile jibes and unchivalrous hatred to bear against her. He, too, had made himself a necessity to the king; and he never slept away a chance of injuring his rival. He knew no mercy, no nobility, no pity. He made her the detested object of the people. With his own hands he penned the witty, scurrilous verses and vile epigrams about Jane Fish, that were sung and flung about the streets of Paris. But she had an enemy more subtle than any at the Court—hour by hour she had to dispute the king with the king's boredom. And it was in the effort to do so that she created her celebrated theatre in the private apartments, calling Boucher and others to her aid. Here the noblest of France vied to obtain the smallest part to play, even an instrument in the orchestra. Boucher left the Art Direction of the Opera to become its decorator in 1748, and did not return until her death. For her also he decorated her beautiful rooms at Bellevue.

The Pompadour now openly took command of the king's will; she dared and succeeded in getting his favourite, Maurepas, banished; she employed the kingly "we." Her rascally father was created Lord of Marigny; her brother, whom the king liked well and called "little brother," was created Marquis de Vandières; her only child, Alexandrine, signed her name as a princess of the blood royal, and would have been married to the blood royal had she not caught the small-pox and died. She amassed a private fortune, castles, and estates;

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

and into her palatial homes she poured art treasures that cost the nation millions of money. She created the porcelain factory of Sevres, kept keen watch over the Gobelins looms, founded the military school of St. Cyr—and she did these things amidst work that would have kept several statesmen busy, and amidst deadly intrigues at Court that would have broken the spirit of many a brilliant man of affairs.

It was in her hectic desire to keep the king from being bored that she stooped, and made Boucher stoop, to the employment of his high artistry in the painting of a series of questionable subjects to tickle the palate of Boredom, and thereby gave rise to the widespread cant that Boucher's art is ever infected by base intention. But Boucher, at his wont, was a healthy human animal; and even in these secret works for the king he did not reach so low as many an artist of pious memory who painted with no excuse but his own pleasure.

It was during these, the great years of his forties, that Boucher created masterpieces that place him in the front rank of the painters of his age. He was so firmly established in 1750 that he moved into a new house in the Rue Richelieu by the Palais Royal. Disappointed in apartments at the Louvre, he was given a studio in the king's library!

The critics were becoming more and more censorious; and one of them hits true with the remark that in his pastorals his shepherdesses look as if they had stepped over from the Opera and would soon be off again thereto. In his forty-eighth year Boucher's art was at its most luminous stage—his atmosphere clear and subtle and exquisitely rendered; his yellows golden; his whites satin-like and silvery; his flesh-tones in the nudes of his goddesses subtly rendered. The beauty of it all was not to last much longer.

Lenormant de Tournehem died suddenly in the November of 1751; the Pompadour's brother, Abel Poisson de Vandières, became Director-General in his stead at the age of twenty-five —soon after, on the death of his father, he became Marquis de Marigny. A shy, handsome youth, a gentleman and an

XVII

BOUCHER

1703 – 1770

"MADAME DE POMPADOUR

(National Gallery of Scotland)

honourable fellow, against whom his sister's sole complaint was that he lacked the brazen effrontery of the courtiers of the day, no man did more for the art of his time. A set of apartments falling vacant at the Louvre on the death of Coypel, Marigny secured them for Boucher. The decoration of the new wing to the palace at Fontainebleau brought Boucher the painting of the ceiling and the principal picture of the council chamber; he had already decorated the dining-room. The Wallace *Rising* and *Setting of the Sun* are of this time, painted for the Pompadour.

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

He was now turning out so much work that it was impossible to give proper care to his art. He refused sternly, as all his life long, to raise his prices; by consequence he had to create a larger amount of work to meet his vogue. It was about this time that Reynolds, passing through Paris, was astounded to see him painting the nude without models. His feverish activity to meet the demand for his works, and the urgent demand of the engravers, compelled him to facility. His flesh-tones became brick-red; and he stood baffled before his work, stung by the critics, blankly realising that his sight was going. Boucher has topped the height of his achievement, he has to "descend the other side of the hill." He begins to grow old.

An ugly intrigue of the queen's party at Court to sap the Pompadour's influence over the king by drawing away the king's affection towards Madame de Choiseul-Romanet, a reckless young beauty of the Court, brought about a strange alliance. The Count de Stainville, one of the Pompadour's bitterest enemies, was shown the king's letter of invitation to his young kinswoman; and he, deeply wounded in his pride that his kinswoman should have been offered to the king, went to the Pompadour and exposed the plot. A close alliance followed; De Stainville thenceforth became her chief guide in affairs of State. At her instance, the king called him to be his prime minister, raising him to the Duchy of Choiseul—a name he was to make illustrious as one of the greatest ministers of France.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

In his fifty-second year, Boucher was made director of the Gobelins looms, to the huge delight of the weavers and all concerned in the tapestry factory. This was the year of his painting the famous portrait of the *Pompadour*, to whom he several times paid this "tribute of immortality." For the Gobelins he painted many superb designs; but his hand's skill began to falter. Sickness fell upon him in his sixtieth year, and was henceforth to give him few days of respite.

The critics, notoriously Diderot, were now attacking him with shameless virulence. Boucher passed it all by; but he felt the change that was taking place in public taste. The ideas of the New Philosophy were infecting public opinion; the Man of Feeling had arisen in the land; and France, humiliated in war, and resenting the follies and the greed of her shameless privileged class, was openly resenting it and all its works. Choiseul had planted his strength deep in the party of the people, and was come near to being their god. His masterly mind had checked Frederick of Prussia to the north; and the nations, exhausted by the struggle, signed the Peace of Paris in 1763. Choiseul, at peace abroad, turned to the blotting out of the turbulent order of the Jesuits at home. Their attempt to end the Pompadour's power made this powerful woman eager to complete his design; the chance soon came, and the order was abolished out of France, and its vast property seized by the State. The Pompadour lived but a short while to enjoy her triumph. Worn out by her feverish activities, assailed by debt, she fell ill of a racking cough, dying on the 15th of the April of 1764 in her forty-second year, keeping her ascendancy over the king and the supreme power over France to the end. Louis, weary of his servitude, had only a heartless epigram to fling at her dead body as she passed to her last resting-place. Whatever the faults of this cold-blooded, calculating, grasping woman, who crushed down every nice instinct of womanhood to win a king's favour; who knew no scruple; who was without mercy, without pardon or forgiveness, without remorse; bitter and adamant in revenge; who turned a deaf ear to the

cries from the Bastille; whose heart knew no love but self, it must be allowed that for Art at least she did splendid service.

The death of the Pompadour robbed Boucher of a friend; but her brother Marigny remained loyal to the old artist. On the death of Carle van Loo, Boucher, at sixty-two, became First Painter to the King.

Beloved by the students, whom he was ever eager to help by deed and word, the old artist was a welcome figure in the studios. But the critics were now virulent against him. Diderot gave himself up to outrageous violence against the ageing painter. If he exhibited at the Salon, Diderot assailed his art; if he did not, Diderot as bitterly assailed him. "When he paints infants," cries Diderot, "you will not find one employed in a real act of life—studying his lesson, reading, writing, stripping hemp." Poor unfortunate infants! for whom Philosophy could find no greater joy in life than *stripping hemp*! Boucher was but an artist. He painted his generation as far as he could see it; and, with all his faults and weaknesses, he never debauched his art with foreign and alien things that had no part in the nation's life; he painted fair France into his landscapes, not a make-believe land he did not know, with preposterous Greek ruins; and, best of all, to his eternal honour, he painted infants glad in their joy to be alive, with no desire to send their happy little bodies to school, with no sickly ambition to make them into budding philosophers, with no thought of making them pose and lie as Men of Feeling. He found no joy in setting their little bodies to toil—in making them "teach a lesson to the spectator," in making them stoop their little shoulders to the "picking of hemp." He painted women in all the allure of their flesh to the healthy man, in that allure that is the prime instinct of the world, which is at the base of the supreme act whereby creation brings forth the splendour of the generations. And if the Puritan stands coughing with hypocrisy before the allure of woman for man, so much the worse for Puritanism. It is God's law, and must be obeyed, or the world perish.

Boucher continued to paint; but the wreath of roses was

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

wilting on a grey head. The features grow pallid—the eyes haggard. The sight fails. The hand alone keeps something of its cunning. He went to Holland, but health shrank further from him. Diderot had near spent his last jibe.

In 1768 the neglected queen went to her grave. The king's grief and contrition came too late, and lasted little longer than the drying of the floods of his tears over the body of his dead consort. A year later he was become the creature of a pretty woman of the gutters, whom he caused to be married to the complacent Count du Barry—the notorious Madame du Barry. But neither the remonstrances of Choiseul with the king against this further degradation of the throne of France, nor the great minister's unconcealed scorn of the upstart countess, nor the dangerous enemy he made for himself thereby, signified now to Boucher, first painter to the king.

Boucher was failing. His son was a prig and a disappointment. His two favourite pupils, BAUDOUIN and DESHAYES, who had married his two girls, died. To the Salon of 1769 he sent his *Caravan of Bohemians*. It was his last display. He had been going about for some time like a gaunt ghost of his former self, afflicted with all the ills inevitable to a life feverishly consumed in work and the pursuit of pleasure. They went to his studio at five of the clock one May morning, and found him seated at his easel, before a canvas of Venus, dead, the loaded paint-brush fallen from his fingers.

So passed Boucher, on the 30th of May 1770, in his sixty-seventh year. Well might Diderot write: "I have spoken too much evil of Boucher; I retract." Boucher was a great master.

An artist of the same period as Boucher was HUGUES TARAVAL (1728-1785).

Boucher had two daughters: one born in 1735, the other in 1740. They married Boucher's pupils, Baudouin and Deshayes.

DESHAYES (1729-1765) was received into the Academy in 1759. His masterpiece is the great ceiling of *The Triumph of Venus* in the house of M. Menier in the Parc Monceaux.

OF PAINTING

BAUDOUIN
1723 – 1769

WHEREIN WE BEHOLD, OUT OF THE STUDIO OF THE SELF-SLAIN LEMOYNE, ARISING THE *GLORY OF PARIS*

BAUDOUIN, the much-loved pupil and son-in-law of Boucher, came into the vogue created by Boucher, and stepped further towards the suggestiveness of Fragonard. His famous *Coucher de la Mariée* and *Modèle honnête*, however, came to a France already concerning itself with the Man of Sentiment and the severity of the old Greeks and Romans; and the critic of to-day looks for nothing in his work but the condemnation of the egregious Diderot. Baudouin married Boucher's second daughter in 1758. Baudouin concentrated on those subjects that play round the gallantries; but the artist has every right to touch upon sex, and some of the mightiest artists of all time have concerned themselves with sex. The attacks on artists like Baudouin are generally sheer prudery. And though he at times painted questionable details, he did not go further than many an artist approved by the sanctimonious. His career was cut short by an early death. His name seems to have been spelt BAUDOUIN and BAUDOIN according to taste.

CHAPTER XIX

WHEREIN WE SEE THE LANDSCAPE OF CLAUDE BEING TURNED INTO THE NEW STYLE OF THE SEVENTEEN-HUNDREDS

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

But let us get back awhile to landscape-painting in the seventeen-hundreds.

JOSEPH VERNET

1714 – 1789

The classic style of Claude found no genius to carry it on; but Joseph Vernet essayed to translate it into the new French atmosphere.

Born at Avignon in 1714, one of twenty-two children to Antoine Vernet, a painter of flowers and the decorations of carriages and chairs and the like, Joseph Vernet early became pupil to his father. He went to Aix for further schooling, and by nineteen was making pictures for important clients. For Madame de Sevigny's granddaughter, the Marquise de Simiane, he painted a dozen overdoors. At twenty, in 1734, one of his patrons sent him to Italy. At Marseilles he was dazzled by the glamour of the sea. At Rome he tried awhile to become an "historical painter," copying the masters. Then the marines of Fergioni attracted him; thence he went awhile to the studio of a sea-painter, Manglard. By 1735 he was selling his work, and in that year began his diary, the "Livres de Raison." From 1735 to 1751 he worked in Italy. At Rome he married an English wife, Virginia Parker, daughter of a Captain Parker. He gradually came into a vogue with his cascades and rocks, his sunsets, his wrecks, his thunderstorms, his misty effects, with those crowds of figures so characteristic of his style. In 1746 he was accepted by the Academy in Paris, and his mists and storms became very popular. He went to Paris in 1752 to a wide success. He

carried on the Claude tradition into the mid-century. Paris seems to have overwhelmed him. The king ordered twenty pictures of French harbours from him, of which he had painted twelve in 1763, when the war saved him from his toil; and in that year he was granted apartments at the Louvre. Thenceforth he took to relying on his facile skill, and poured out his "scenes" as if from memory to a formula.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE LANDSCAPE OF CLAUDE BEING TURNED INTO THE NEW STYLE OF THE SEVENTEEN HUNDREDS

A kind and lovable man, he was greatly loved. Generous of hand, helpful and considerate, he won all hearts. Plagued by a number of needy relations, his later years from 1770 were saddened by the madness of his wife. But he lived prosperous and cheerful. He was a lover of music. His works were much bought by the English. The Louvre holds a good *Port of Marseilles* by him, and a masterpiece called *Les Baigneuses*.

Death took the kindly painter in the December of 1789, on the eve of the Revolution. His grandson, HORACE VERNET (1789-1863), was born in the June before his death—that Vernet who was to come to fame as a battle-painter; and in the same year Joseph Vernet's son, CARLE VERNET (1758-1836), was accepted by the Academy in his thirty-first year—who, trained by his father and LÉPICIÉ, became a caricaturist under the Directory, the lover of horseflesh who "rode like a jockey," whose *Morning of the Battle of Austerlitz* at the Salon of 1808 drew the Legion of Honour from Napoleon; he died in 1836.

LANTARA

1729 – 1778

Whilst Vernet saw landscape in classical fashion, LANTARA took the modern delight in the earth and sky—a lazy fellow, who loved his tavern and jollity. He was the son of a weaver of Orcy, and began to earn a living wage as herd-boy, when his artistic bent was discovered by his master, who had him trained under a painter at Versailles. His irregular life alone prevented him from coming into a wide vogue. He was happy only in the lowest company, and he cared nothing for money—he painted only for the joy of the thing. So he wrought with

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

rare simplicity the land of his birth. Living from hand to mouth, he went, when sickness fell upon him, into the hospital; and in hospital he at last died.

ROBERT and TAUNAY (1735-1830), and DEMARNE (1744-1829), all called Boucher or Fragonard or others to paint figures into their landscapes. LEPRINCE, better known as engraver and draughtsman, often painted landscape without figures.

CHAPTER XX

WHEREIN, OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL, ENTERS THE GREAT MAKER OF THE PORTRAIT OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH'S AGE

LA TOUR
1704 - 1789

WHEREIN, OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL, ENTERS THE GREAT MAKER OF THE PORTRAIT OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH'S AGE

BOUCHER was but a year old, Chardin but five, when, on the 5th of the September of 1704—the year that brought the news of the disaster of Blenheim to the ears of the old King of France—there was born to one François de La Tour, chanter of the royal chapter of the collegiate church in the northern town of St. Quentin, a child whom they christened MAURICE QUENTIN DE LA TOUR.

La Tour was the singer's third son. The singer, once trumpeter of cavalry in the Duke of Maine's regiment of carabineers, had drifted back to his native St. Quentin; but poor as was his calling he had the chance of giving his lads a fair education, whereby his eldest son went into finance, another into the army, and his third son Maurice into an artistic calling. The once trumpeter had married one Reine Françoise Havard; of their five sons and a daughter, the three eldest sons reached the years of manhood. The mother dying in the painter's nineteenth year, 1723, the trumpeter-father married Marie Françoise Deliège, who became the mother of two sons, Honoré Adrien (Adrien François) de La Tour and Jean François de La Tour. The artist's stepmother was left a widow in 1731, the painter's twenty-seventh year.

The small Maurice did not glitter amongst the latinities at college, but was early employing the pencil, and the father wisely put the lad under a drawing-master of the town. Of his childhood and boyhood little is known. Gossip has it that at fifteen he ran away from home, and, going to Paris, appeared

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

before the engraver TARDIEU, whose address he had discovered at the foot of a print, and who had answered a letter from him under the delusion that the young fellow wanted to become his apprentice; but the youth wanted to become a painter, and Tardieu good-naturedly took him to Delaunay's picture-shop on the Quay de Gesores, then to Vernansal, who would have nothing to do with him; but he had better luck with the painter of still-life, SPOËDE, and from him he is said to have learnt the use of the brush. La Tour is next heard of at Reims, taking part in the coronation of the twelve-year-old boy-king Louis XV (October 25, 1722), whence La Tour returned to his home at St. Quentin, a stripling of eighteen. But it is in 1723, the year the boy-king Louis XV was declared to be of man's estate at thirteen, that a police-court scandal lifts the veil from the shadowy life of Maurice Quentin de La Tour in his nineteenth year. On the 3rd of November 1723 was written at Laon a sentence pronounced by her judges upon a poor maiden, Anne Bougier, for having given birth secretly to a still-born child on the 15th of August, without notice of motherhood declared beforehand—as serious offence as child-murder in those days. The seduced girl escaped with an admonition from her judges and a small fine to be given to the poor of the town: but the judges set the blame of her fall upon one Maurice Quentin de La Tour, a youth of nineteen, painter by calling, living at St. Quentin, and her first cousin. That decision proves the high honour of the magistracy—that magistracy that was about to emerge into supreme guidance over the noble destinies of France.

The girl, three years older than her cousin, had settled at St. Quentin with her mother in the humble calling of knitters of stockings; and there the affection between artist and pretty cousin had ended in passion and the sad old story. The mother had packed off to Laon with the girl at the New Year to save the home of the La Tours from scandal, but the girl had been denounced by some busybody, and the news of the ugly business came to St. Quentin, and sent the young artist off in hurried

flight. He fled to Reims, thence to Cambrai, and around him grew a nasty reputation probably all tacked to his evil repute over the ugly betrayal and desertion of his pretty cousin. As a matter of fact, the young fellow took the affair seriously enough when it was too late. At Cambrai his art, which must have been crude enough, seems to have caught the favour of some of the foreign diplomats gathered there in the January of 1724, and La Tour is said to have gone to London with the English Ambassador.

WHEREIN, OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL, ENTERS THE GREAT MAKER OF THE PORTRAIT OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH'S AGE

That La Tour went to Paris and entered the studio of an artist is certain, but at what date is now lost to us. Born in the year that the Salons were closed, and being thirty-three when they were opened again in 1737, his early record is difficult to follow. His first acknowledged master was Du Pouche. He early met many rebuffs; the young fellow had made the portrait of the daughter-in-law to the aged Boulogne, first painter to the king, but the old painter, whilst struck by the power of handling and mastery of colour of the young fellow, was fretted by his lack of draughtsmanship, and seizing him by the collar, and dragging him before the portrait, said: "Look, you stupid fellow, if you be worthy of the gifts which Nature has bestowed upon you! If you wish to become a man, go and learn to draw!" The lesson bit deep into La Tour's brain. For the rest, during these years of his twenties, gossip clashes with gossip.

But one thing is clear—he early decided on the new and fashionable medium of pastel instead of oils. It suited his temperament to a nicety. Quick in the handling, subtle and delicate in colour, it did not fret his irritable nerves—that life-long curse to him—and it freed him from the smell of paints which sickened him.

From the time he settled in Paris, La Tour came rapidly to the front. The first engraved portrait after a pastel by La Tour was that of *Voltaire*, of which M. Strauss possesses the superb sketch, one of the supreme portraits ever wrought by man's hands. But here is no hesitancy of the student; the

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

draughtsmanship is astounding, the emotional statement immortal. The engraving by Langlois of the finished portrait is dated 1731, so that La Tour and Voltaire must have met at latest shortly after Voltaire's return from England in 1729. The friendship was to have a profound effect on the artist's art and life. Here we have his portrait painted by one of the most forthright artists of the age, the Voltaire of the sarcastic mouth and searching eyes, who mocked away the follies of France—a haunting mask.

La Tour at thirty had arrived. In 1736 he was living with his elder brother Charles—in the vogue, in comfort and ease; his brother had made a fortune in victualling the French armies in Italy, and La Tour had shared in his speculations. Sharp of tongue and difficult of temper in the company of the great and rich, La Tour was gentle and affectionate amongst his own kin. His social rise was now rapid; he moved amongst the wits and celebrities of Paris. Wholly without snobbery, he kept his bristly side for the great; he was never guilty of a condescension or paltriness to his humbler kin, with whom he kept touch, and whom he denied never.

Short—some five feet two inches in height—of a pallid complexion, and well made, prompt and decided in carriage and step, he carried his head high and well—the eyes quick, lively, and full of fire; the face oval and well-shaped; the lips thin; in his ways refined, with the neat and tidy and clean habits of the exquisite.

La Tour was now moving in that brilliant circle that supped once a week at the house of Madame Geoffrin, and there and behind the scenes at the Opera and theatre he spent most of his time when the daylight was gone. He was given to airing his philosophies, not always too logical. Society in Paris was not a model of the proprieties; nor was La Tour a saint. But the intellectuals were looking at life fearlessly, and there was arising a new and virile code of conduct. The religious fanaticism of King Sun and the bigoted Maintenon had gone hand in hand with sexual laxity; and the corruption

of the Court was being flung into the melting-pot with Court religion, which had consorted with it. All France was scribbling. Some of the letters that passed between La Tour and Madame Geoffrin and Madame Thelusson, however, show that if their relations were platonic, they were warmly platonic.

WHEREIN, OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL, ENTERS THE GREAT MAKER OF THE PORTRAIT OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH'S AGE

At a very different house, the home of La Poupelinière, the famous financier, at Passy, La Tour moved in a society probably more to his taste. There foregathered the bloods who were interested in the arts, in merry meetings. But it was behind the scenes of the theatres and the Opera that he was happiest. He made the portraits of celebrated singers and actors and dancers; and you may see at St. Quentin to-day a large number of the pastel sketches for them, and of celebrities of the day from *Louis XV* to the frail beauties who were the toasts of lightly sinning Paris. And La Tour saw too deep to content himself with their fripperies and pose of charm; he painted the frippery of their character, and he caught here and there the haunting hint of sadness and disillusion even whilst the lips smile their set smile. For him the subtleties of individual character, the carriage of the head, the tell-tale glance of the eye, the betrayal of the lip, the essentials. He caught the unrehearsed effect. To this end he fretted his will, bent all his powers, toiled and agonised. So, as though they lived to-day, we may look upon *Mademoiselle Clairon*, *Mademoiselle Dangeville*, the famous actress *Madame Favart*, the dancer *La Camargo*, and her dancing father of the noble blood of Italy *Cupis*, the dainty dancers *Mesdemoiselles Puvigny*, *le Maure* and *Arnauld*, their dancing and their singing done. Of the players who amused the town—*Jean Monet*, *Tomasso Vizentini* the harlequin, and *Manelli*, whose very face sets one laughing. Above all, there you may see at St. Quentin the long oval face of the singer *Marie Fel*, who was to turn La Tour's gadding love into a long romance, keeping it from the time she came into his life to the end of his days. There hangs also the *Madame Boëte de Saint-Leger*, and those several handsome faces of the *Unknown*. Who were they, these silent ones?

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

La Tour cared nothing for rank or wealth or power when he stood before his sitter and stripped off his coat to his work. Careless of all else but recording the thing seen, he wrought his art, his sitter became but a model, and he lorded it over that model until he had created a work of art, whether king or the king's mistress, actress or player, farmer-general or queen; and when his hand's skill had set the last stroke upon the work, there was no mistaking prince for clown, or light-o'-love for genius. To the children of the theatre he showed a gracious spirit that he withheld from princes and the highly placed. But he steeped all in the atmosphere in which they lived—he one of the greatest painters of the portrait that France has bred.

For the priests he had also a warm corner in his heart; and he limned the philosophic *Abbés de cour* with consummate skill—the *Abbé Huber*, the *Abbé le Blanc*, who was so hot a champion of the artists of the day, the *Abbé Soulavie*, the *Abbé Pommyer*, the wrinkled face of his confessor *Père Emmanuel*, who probably laid his penances lightly upon the wilful fire-eater, the philosophic *Abbé Galiani*, the *Abbé Regley*, the *Abbé Nollet*, the *Abbé Lattaignant*, and that *Abbé Raynal* of the sharp incisive pen that was to help to lead men's eyes to the great awakening. And of himself he has left us the famous *L'Auteur qui rit.*

La Tour does not lack sitters, but is not much known to the public. On the 25th of May 1737 he corrects this, and presents himself to the Academy, is accepted, and is called upon to make the portraits of the painters *Restout* and Boucher's old master *Lemoyne*, as his pictures of reception. Three days thereafter comes the awful news of the suicide of Lemoyne, and La Tour is asked to paint J. B. van Loo instead of him, which he never did, painting *Dumont le Romain* in its place. Shortly after, the first Salon of Louis xv opened its doors to the public. La Tour and Boucher were by this time close friends, and La Tour sent to this first great Salon of Louis xv's days a portrait of *Madame Boucher* and *L'Auteur qui rit*, now at the

Louvre. The portrait of Boucher's pretty wife enormously increased his vogue.

During the thirty-seven years that followed, up to 1773, La Tour sent to succeeding Salons some hundred and fifty portraits in pastel, that limn the features of many of the most celebrated people of the reign.

WHEREIN, OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL, ENTERS THE GREAT MAKER OF THE PORTRAIT OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH'S AGE

Meantime the Court turned its eyes upon La Tour. To the Salon of 1745 he sent the *Louis XV*, now at the Louvre, the *Dauphin* also there, the Louvre *Philip Orry, Comte de Vignorry*, amongst others. He was at the height of his vogue. On the 10th of March 1745 he was given apartments at the Louvre. He was no easy taskmaster; he demanded many sittings, and his self-criticism was difficult to satisfy. He would destroy work after work. He would torment himself as to the quality of his craftsmanship and the lifelikeness of the character of his sitter. He insisted on his sitters paying according to their wealth. Many stories are told of his wilfulness. He delighted to make the great sue for their portraits; and he worried them whilst they sat according to the degree of their greatness. When the *Dauphin* sat for him he twitted the prince on his failings, and rebuked him for the bad bringing-up of his children. He spoke harshly to the Dauphiness, *Marie Josèphe*, but he found his gaucheries swept aside with gentle tact, and met by good-breeding; grew to respect her; and, to redeem his acts, he was actually guilty of a gallantry, to which the amiable princess replied by sending him a gold snuff-box decorated with six paintings after Teniers, a present which La Tour ever held in reverent esteem.

Quick to fly into a temper, of a tart wit, ironic of tongue, his was just the knight-errant temper to break a lance with the conventions. But to the brilliant intellectuals of his day, especially such as were poor in pocket, he displayed a sweetness of disposition and a gentleness in marked contrast with his treatment of the merely rich or merely great.

In 1746 La Tour sent to the Salon his *Restout*, now at the

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

Louvre, damaged by his frequent retouchings and "fixings." This year he was advanced to the rank of Academician.

In 1748, as the De Goncourts neatly put it, the list of his works read like a page from the *Almanach de Gotha*—the *King* and the *Queen* and the *Dauphin* (all at the Louvre, the *Maréchal de Saxe* amongst the number).

La Tour was now unfortunately experimenting with his "secret" for "fixing" pastels, by putting spirits of wine at the back of the paper, and a white varnish immediately afterwards, which caused such damage to his works.

The Dresden *Marie Josèphe de Saxe*, the Dauphiness, was as the Salon of 1749.

La Tour was getting restless. He changed in 1750 his apartments at the Louvre for those of Pigalle, the beginning of that restless exchange of rooms in the old palace that became a jest amongst his comrades. However, all went merrily for La Tour.

It was in 1750 that he sent to the Salon his portrait of *Himself* which started the tale of his bitter jealousy of Perronneau that Diderot put into print seventeen years afterwards. The pastels of Perronneau had been coming into wide vogue; and Diderot states that La Tour, to injure the other, arranged with Perronneau to make his, La Tour's, portrait for the Salon, he secretly making a portrait of himself in the same pose, which he arranged with Chardin to hang pendant to it, to the discomfiture of the younger man. Chardin was not the man to fall in with such an act; nor was he the hanger that year. It is true that La Tour's portrait is in much the same pose as Perronneau's; but Diderot spoke of a wholly different portrait by La Tour which has nothing in common. There is no "hat turned down at the side" in Perronneau's portrait of La Tour.

In 1751 La Tour became "Councillor" to the Academy, its highest grade that a portrait-painter could reach. The honour was long delayed owing to the hot warfare La Tour fought against the low prices paid to artists for their works

by the State; and, looking upon the offer of the order of St. Michael as a bribe, he indignantly refused to have nobility conferred upon him. He was often accused of "greed of gain," but when a pension of a thousand livres could have been secured for the asking, he begged it for his friend Parrocel and his master Restout.

WHEREIN, OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL, ENTERS THE GREAT MAKER OF THE PORTRAIT OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH'S AGE

In 1753 La Tour, on the eve of fifty, made the famous portrait of his friend *Jean Jacques Rousseau*. Rousseau was not yet become the World-Disturber. He was out-at-elbows and poor. And La Tour showed to him a gentleness and admiration that do him immortal credit. He immortalised the man of plagued soul at a time when his art was at its richest. Diderot, not without spite, wrote fatuous qualifications of the portrait, rare in his writings upon La Tour. "I see but the author of *Devin de Village*, well-clothed, sprucely combed, powdered, and ridiculously seated on a rush-bottom'd chair." . . . The sneer came quaintly from philosopher Diderot, with his everlasting demand for truth to Nature in art! He evidently thought that Rousseau should have been set astride a lute, or aboard a unicorn, or reclining on clouds, with straws in his hair.

To the Salon of 1753 went amongst other great portraits by him, his *Madame de Mondonville playing on a Harpsicord*, his *Marquis de Voyer d'Argenson*, his fine *Sylvestre*, his *D'Alembert*, and his famous *Manelli* wreathed in smiles.

The Pompadour ruled over France. Reigning as queen of the arts, she tried to win La Tour to the painting of her portrait. She found him no easy prey to flattery. He decided that the siege should be a long one. Marigny, the "little brother," conveyed the desire with tactful skill. The siege opened in 1750. The first attack was repulsed with loss. Even Marigny's gentle nature inclined to loss of temper. However, Marigny at last got La Tour to the business; he made a couple of sketches. Then more delay. Marigny begs him "to put upon the easel the picture for which he has made the studies." La Tour makes a hundred excuses; is a prey to

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

despondency, fears a fever, must go into the country, go to bed, get out of the state of vexation caused by the accident to his sketches. Marigny reminded him that to his sister he owes his recognition, and to himself some friendship. The Pompadour herself writes—wheedles—flatters. La Tour yields and goes to Versailles. He cannot rebuff Marigny's gentle soul. Still, La Tour lays down conditions: he must not be disturbed, even by the king. La Tour arrived and, as his habit was, took off the buckles of his shoes, his garters, his neckerchief, hung up his wig on the royal chandelier, pulled a cap over his head, and—having made himself free to work—began to sketch the king's mistress. The king entered the room, the Pompadour smiled. La Tour made a grimace, rose, took off his cap, and said abruptly, "You promised me, Madame, that your door should be locked." The king begged him to stay. "It is impossible for me to obey your Majesty," said La Tour; "I will come back when Madame is alone." Taking his wig and belongings he carried them off to another room, dressed, and departed. And for days he could not be lured back; and then only on the most solemn assurances of privacy.

Yet the king should have known his man. Before, when La Tour was making sketches from the Pompadour, the king had entered with one or two others—it was when the English were threatening the French at sea—and he had got to talking about the new buildings he was about to raise, when, all of a sudden, La Tour had said, "That 's fine; but ships would be better." The king had reddened and left the room.

The luck seemed to be against the finishing of this great portrait of the Pompadour. She fell ill. Her daughter Alexandrine died; then her father. At last, after three years, La Tour's famous portrait appeared at the Salon of 1755. It hangs to-day at the Louvre. It was the sensation of Paris. There she sits as the reigning deity of the world of letters and of art.

But she was not at the end of her troubles with the portrait. La Tour fought her bitterly for the price of it.

OF PAINTING

WHEREIN, OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL, ENTERS THE GREAT MAKER OF THE PORTRAIT OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH'S AGE

The theatre was to bring into La Tour's life the beautiful singer whose name will endure as long as that of the artist's fame—Marie Fel. At the Salon of 1757 appears amongst other portraits by his hand, the picture of *Marie Fel.* Born in Bordeaux on the 26th of October 1713, the little girl-child of the organist of that city was dowered with an exquisite voice. At twenty-one, in 1734, she burst upon Paris as a queen of song. For twenty-four years she was to sing at the Opera. The secret records of the police write her down as "Fel—a little young woman, but great musician, singing Italian exceedingly well. She is not at all pretty; she is said to be the mistress of M. le duc de Rochechouart." She came into La Tour's life, thenceforth reigned over his affections, and was openly accepted by every one as his *amie.* Their comradeship was a close and happy affair; she watched over him, and soothed his irritable, restless will. She brought peace to the wayward man. He loved her to the end; even when reason left him and the lamp of his plagued soul guttered low, he remembered her.

In 1760 Death began to be busy amongst La Tour's beloved kin. He lost his eldest brother, then his elder stepbrother. He drew closer to his brother Charles and his stepbrother, the army officer, Jean François de la Tour. To 1761 belong his portraits of *Chardin* and the withered, tragic poet *Crebillon.* His skill is at its height. He was now painting all the princes of the blood. In 1764 died the Pompadour. La Tour was absent from the Salons for five years. In 1766 he went to Holland, and whilst there he lost his brother Charles. At Zuylen, near Utrecht, the old artist was received with great kindness by the family of Mademoiselle de Tuyll, afterwards Madame de Charrière, whose portrait he made.

The death of his brother Charles, the army contractor, was a heavy blow to La Tour; and he poured all his affection upon his stepbrother, the lieutenant of cavalry, whom he made his heir.

La Tour was ageing rapidly. To the Salon of 1771 he

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

sent three *portraits of men*; to that of 1773 *several heads*; but the critics are silent. La Tour has become the Man who Was. The fire has gone out of his art, the labour alone remains. He now works upon his portraits until he overloads the fragile pastel. He spoils masterpieces of his great days with experiments in "fixing." It becomes a jest about his repaintings and "fixings" of the *Restout*; also there is laughter about his changes of rooms—he changes with Greuze. In 1778 his soldier-brother retires from his brilliant career, decorated with the Cross of St. Louis, and settles at St. Quentin. But La Tour had realised in 1768 that his life's work was done. He put his house in order, planned to encourage art in his town, endowed the Academy, arranged to leave a sum to endow a fund for poor women in childbed. The awful memory of his youthful sin haunts him.

About his seventieth year he began that quacking of himself that did his health no good. He rapidly went insane. His stepbrother took him in at St. Quentin. The town-council received him in state, with bell-ringing and gaiety and rejoicings, and placed a garland of oak-leaves upon his head. But the old brain was failing. All were kind to the old artist, and his knightly brother watched over him, keeping Marie Fel informed of his welfare. He fell into visions; and for four years he crept into second infancy. He would shuffle down the street when the sun came out and embrace the trees, saying, "Soon thou shalt be good for warming the poor." On the 17th of February 1788 death took him gently. Marie Fel passed away in 1794 amidst the whirlwind of the Reign of Terror.

CHAPTER XXI

WHEREIN THE PORTRAIT OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH'S YEARS COMES TO FURTHER TRIUMPHS

PERRONNEAU

17 ? – 1796

On the 27th of August 1746 the Academy "accepted" the presentation of an artist "Jean Baptiste Perronneau of Paris." The youth Perronneau flits in somewhat ghostly fashion through old Père Cars' engraving studios; but of his early days little is known.

The son of Henri Perronneau, a burgess of Paris, and of Marie Geneviève Fremont, he was 'prenticed to the father of Laurent Cars, and is said to have been pupil to Natoire, with Vien as fellow-student. The chart of his restless wandering and wayfaring is lost to us. He never caught the favour of the Court. His fine art of portraiture was wrought amongst the well-to-do middle-class, "who have no history," as they say in France. He had to be content with his "sisters and his cousins and his aunts," his neighbours, his friends, his comrades of the brush, with a rare princess breaking at times into the company; he thereby has left us the portraits of the ordinary and accomplished folk of his day. His unstable and gadding habits took him wandering over Europe, and his unquiet spirit was dogged by ill-luck to his grave—indeed dogged when dead.

He makes his bow to us diffidently enough on the printed page, in his signed engraving of a title-page of 1738. He was drawn from oils to the pastel like La Tour. In 1740 he signed the pastel-portrait of *Mademoiselle Desfriches*, which reveals hesitations and awkwardnesses of an unskilled hand. But in six years he was admitted to the Academy, and his brilliant portraits at the Salon of 1746 were the talk of the studios.

His formal "reception" into the Academy came at a time when the academics were beginning to sneer at the vogue of the

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

pastel; and a pastellent, ALEXIS LOIR, received in the April of 1746, was admitted, not on the merits of his pastel, but on "his talent for modelling." Perronneau was called upon to paint two portraits, of Oudry and Adam ainé, *in oils*. He spent seven years in clearing his debt; but he used his right to display pastels from the start in 1746. By 1750 he was sending fifteen works in oils and pastels, which included the famous *Mlle ——holding a Little Cat*, now at the Louvre. But a far different cause was to bring him into prominence at this Salon of 1750. He made the portrait of *La Tour*, now at St. Quentin, about which a slander was started years after by Diderot.

Perronneau was now clearly in the vogue, with a large number of sitters. In 1751, amongst many portraits, he sent his fine *Chevotet* and *Madame Chevotet*, now at Orléans. In 1753 the Academy was still without his "reception pieces," and he appears to have been charged with his fault; but his excuses were accepted, with a last chance of six months wherein to carry out the works, when he painted the *Oudry* and *Adam the Elder*, now at the Louvre, which were received with loud applause at the Academy. The well-known *Pierre Bouguer* at the Louvre was painted this year, but did not go to the Salon.

He was in the full tide of success, the venom had left the pens of the critics, orders were flowing in, and he took to himself a wife. On the 9th of November 1754 he married one of the daughters of Aubert, the miniature-painter. And that Perronneau was eminent in his career is proved by the long list of the eminent who bore witness to his marriage-contract. But he flits his home from street to street just as before—each Salon sees him give a new address. Eighteen portraits were his share of the Salon of 1755. In 1756 we find him at Bourdeaux, in which neighbourhood are to-day many of his finest pastel portraits. Here he painted the poet *Robbé de Beauveset*.

This was the poet who carried on a close correspondence with his uncle, the artist Desfriches, to the end of his days—that correspondence that has yielded so much detail about the trial and execution of Damiens who attempted the life of the king,

WHEREIN THE PORTRAIT OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH'S YEARS COMES TO FURTHER TRIUMPHS

and suffered such an appalling death by consequence. "Ah! my dear uncle," writes the poet, "what a cruel thing to be a lay figure! This devil Perronneau demanded yesterday . . . that I should hold out the left arm, a pencil-holder between thumb and forefinger, and that I should remain in this weary attitude the entire day. . . . Never Spartan pushed patience so far." The poet clearly suffered; but seems to have risked a second martyrdom, for, in 1758, he again writes: "Perronneau kept me on my legs half the entire day, always in the same attitude. He would not even let me blow my nose."

Perronneau was leading a wandering life. In 1759 he was at Lyons—in Italy in the same year—then we find him painting portraits in Holland for two or three years, in wide vogue. In the December of 1765 he bought a house by the Barrière de Montreuil in Paris. A son was born to him in the November of 1766. He showed regularly at the Salons. In 1767 he was at Bourdeaux. Diderot, as usual, attacks Perronneau bitterly. Poor Perronneau in 1770 writes to his friend Desfriches of his worries; he finds wandering about to be cheaper than rooms in Paris, where he must be alone, since the racket of children drives him mad, and the stabs of the critics go home every time. Two years and a half afterwards he is in Holland again, his wife near Paris ailing and sad and threatened with lung trouble. The Du Barry's reign brings no fortune to Perronneau. This second journey to Holland is a failure—sitters fail him—his health begins to break down. On the May-Day of 1772 he arrives in Paris, but is soon wandering again. Bouvart de Fourqueux, his chief ally and friend, seems unable to bring him back his vogue. In Paris few sitters come to him. In 1773 a second son is born to him. He goes south to Lyons to repair his fortunes, only to find sitters coy. Success avoids him at every hand. His wife, too, had fallen into a deep melancholy. He returned to Paris in the summer, sent several portraits to the Salon of 1773. But he was discouraged and broken. The Du Barry had brought him no splendour; the death of Louis xv brought him no favour from the new king and queen.

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

The last ten years of his life are befogged in thick obscurity. No works of his went to the Salons of 1775, to that of 1777 but one portrait, the oil portrait of *Coquebert de Montbret* that drew harsh criticism as to the hardness and "bilious" yellowness that had been falling upon his vision. At the Salon of 1779 he showed *several Heads of Women*; the critics were silent. The old favourite has lost his court. Yet the *Comte Goyon de Vaudurant* is of this time—a fine work long given to La Tour, In 1783 Perronneau was in Holland again. For there, on the 19th of November, the Sieur Jean Martens announces to the town-secretary of Amsterdam that "the Sieur Jean Baptiste Perronneau, of no particular profession, aged forty-two (?), living in the Heerengracht, is dead of the fever."

So poor Perronneau died in an inn amongst the haunts of the rich, and was buried amongst the poor of the city!

His widow, in accord with his will, married forthwith, on the 17th of February 1784, Robin the artist, who had been admitted to the Academy twelve years before—he who painted the great ceiling of the theatre at Bordeaux.

Of other painters of the portrait in Louis the Fifteenth's mid-reign were Roslin the Swede, Duplessis, and Drouais.

ROSLIN
1718–1793

ALEXANDRE ROSLIN was a Swede who came under the French glamour. Though his portraits run to leatheriness, he at times brought forth such masterpieces as the famous *Portrait of Himself* at Stockholm. He took formal leave of the French Academy on the 30th of April 1774, on returning to Sweden, after winning to wide repute in Paris.

DUPLESSIS
1725 – 1802

JOSEPH SILFRÈDE DUPLESSIS, pupil to SUBLEYRAS, painted some of the most illustrious personages of the age. He shares with Drouais the honours of portraiture of the reign of Louis XVI.

The mantle of Nattier fell upon Drouais.

DROUAIS

1727–1775

WHEREIN THE PORTRAIT OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH'S YEARS COMES TO FURTHER TRIUMPHS

FRANÇOIS HUBERT DROUAIS, born in Paris in 1727 to a portrait-painter, HUBERT DROUAIS (1699-1767), learnt the mysteries of his art from his brilliant father, from whom he went to Nonotte, thence to Carle van Loo, then to Natoire, and eventually to Boucher. Received into the Academy in 1758, upon his portrait of the sculptors *Coustou* and *Bouchardon*, which at once brought him the favour of the Court, he painted thereafter the whole of the Royal Family, and was early painting the celebrities and beauties of the age. The critics are wont to praise him even whilst they pour scorn on Nattier on whom he founded his art. He too painted the great ones as goddesses in Nattier's manner, and did it with rare skill. South Kensington has the exquisite bust of his fine *Dauphine* at Chantilly in which Marie Antoinette is posed goddess-wise—a fine performance. We owe some of the best portraits of those who were great at the Court of Louis XVI. to the art of Drouais. He died in Paris in 1775, a year after Louis XV. Drouais was to the Du Barry what Boucher was to the Pompadour.

Drouais had a son, JEAN GERMAIN DROUAIS, born in 1763, of great promise, but the amiable and brilliant young fellow, going to Rome in 1785 with his master, the classic David, after making sensation after sensation with works sent to Paris, fell ill of a fever, dying at Rome in 1788.

VESTIER

1740–1824

ANTOINE VESTIER made a long stay in England and caught much of the English style and vision.

DANLOUX

1745 – 1806

DANLOUX painted the portraiture of the years of Louis XVI, and had to fly to England at the Revolution, but he never came to high achievement.

CHAPTER XXII

WHEREIN A HANDSOME DANDY IS SEEN TO ESSAY THE HOMELY, NOT ALWAYS WITH SUCCESS, BUT CATCHES THE ALLURE OF GIRLHOOD

GREUZE
1725 – 1805

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

At Tournus, by Macon city, on the 21st of August 1725, in a humble home, to a slater of the place, was born Jean Baptiste Greuze. As the child grew up to youth, the master-slater seems to have developed his business, for he had the ambition to make the lad a part of the firm as architect. But the child early showed the habits of an artist; and the taking of the weapons of art from the boy, and the thrashings for making pictures on the walls, were of no avail. Making a pen-and-ink drawing of *St. James* at nights when supposed to be asleep, the boy gave it as birthday present to his father, who mistook it for an engraving, and thereafter sent the lad to Lyons to the picture-manufactory of the painter Grandon there. He was taught to copy instead of to create. The fair and handsome youth was from the first intensely sensitive to the beauty of women; and to women he came with a high romantic sense of chivalry in strange contrast with the spirit of his age. He fell deeply in love with the wife of his master Grandon, who was the mother of grown-up daughters, and he worshipped her in silence.

The dandified youth, with a fine conceit of himself, set out at twenty for Paris, with little else but his belief in himself for sustenance; and at Paris, for ten years, he knew high hopes and bitter disappointments in a life of continual struggle. But his overweening conceit made for him a difficult wayfaring. To Natoire, who had advised a correction in his work, he

XIX

DROUAIS

1727–1775

"LA DAME EN ROSE"

(Collection of Madame de Ganay)

(From Haldane Macfall's "French Pastellists" by kind permission of Messrs Macmillan)

retorted hotly: "Monsieur, if you could do anything so good yourself you would be happy enough." Putting in some study at the Academy, and painting the pot-boiler for scanty living, he at last caught the eye of Sylvestre and Pigalle, through whom he showed at the Academy in 1755, his thirtieth year, the *Père qui lit la Bible à ses Enfants* (A father reading the Bible to his children), which brought him recognition. He struck the coming vogue of the Homely in sentimental fashion. Diderot was thundering his dogma: "To show virtue charming and vice hateful should be the aim of every honest man who employs pen, brush, or sculptor's chisel." The philosophers had found their painter-moralist. The Man of Feeling walked in the land. Greuze become a rage. He was accepted by the Academy. Powerful friends arose about him. The Abbé Gougenet invited him to go with him to Italy, and he went for two years which had little effect on his artistry.

WHEREIN A HANDSOME DANDY IS SEEN TO ESSAY THE HOMELY, BUT CATCHES THE ALLURE OF GIRLHOOD

Whilst he was copying a picture for a great Italian noble, the duke's beautiful young daughter fell violently in love with the handsome man and declared her passion; and he thenceforth absented himself owing to the great difference of their position, until she fell ill and he was brought secretly to her by her old nurse. In the midsummer madness, she would have taken all she had and gone to Paris with him, but his sense of honour forbade. Pretending illness he fled. Years afterwards she wrote to him thanking him—she was now a happy wife and a mother; the happiness she owed to him.

Greuze came back to Paris in 1757 to a wide success. His *Village Bride* (or *L'Accordée du Village*, or as it was best first-named, *A Father handing over the Marriage-portion of his Daughter*) in 1761 brought Greuze his second public success, artistically far better deserved. It hangs at the Louvre, and reveals a sentiment above the mawkish moods so loved by Greuze. And here he touched in surer fashion that homely note that was now being heard in the land. The crude and theatric *Father's Curse* that followed in 1765 and *The Son Punished*, both now at the Louvre, betrayed the sentimentality of the man, and

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

Diderot's gush that they proved "great qualities of the heart, and good morals," sounds fantastic enough.

In this year of 1765 Greuze rather baffled the moralists with a voluptuous design of *The Kiss* (*Le Baiser envoyé*), in which a young woman leans over a window-sill to throw a kiss. He had given signs already of his charming gift of painting girls' heads that was to bring out his finest art; but this charming picture of *The Kiss* must have caused heart-searchings amongst the moralists. Greuze at once proved himself the better artist when least moral. He frankly called the picture *La Voluptueuse.*

On his return from Italy, Greuze had given himself up to poring over the art of Rubens. In his strolls to the Luxembourg Palace he would pass the bookshops on the quays. At Babuty's shop on the Quai St. Augustin, his beautiful daughter served the customers; she was the talk of the quarter. Greuze, in an unhappy moment, went to the shop, and the girl decided on his conquest. She gave herself presents from him, and announced their engagement—soon she was announcing their marriage. A couple of years thereafter, in 1761, he married her in a country town. He had made for himself the blister of his life. Both of small means, strife soon began with the extravagant jade. The man gave her his romantic love, and painted her again and again. She is the heroine of *The Kiss*, and she liked the part. She again was *La Mère Bien-Aimée.* But the girl soon grew weary of the tame life, spent his money like water, filled his house with riot and lovers. She would strike him in her tantrums. He sought relief in hard work. She interfered with his life, with his pupils, with his friends. At last he had to put his two girls into a convent, and there he would visit them; she let them severely alone. Meantime, egged on by Diderot, he proceeded to paint the Hermitage *Paralytic* (or *Filial Piety*), the Hermitage *Fruit of a Good Education*, the *Father's Blessing*, and *The Torn Will.*

But Greuze was now developing that art which his instinct told him was his true path to fame. He was interested in the

XX

GREUZE

1725–1805

"THE BROKEN PITCHER"

(La Cruche Cassée)

(Louvre)

Painted in oil on canvas. Oval, 3 ft. 10½ in. × 2 ft. 9½ in. (1·18 × 0·85).

fascination of young womanhood. Even when he painted childhood, it was rather girlhood on the edge of womanhood that drew him; and when he paints a little girl, it is always with the promise and hint of the woman to come that he sees her. This is scarcely moral; at the same time it is not immoral. It is the lure of the feminine that calls to the heart of every healthy man. Yet Greuze loved to play with the lure, toyed with it, and insisted upon it, until he slyly suggests desire. Whether he call them *Innocence* or what not, the lips are sensuous, the draperies reveal more than they conceal of the rounded bosom, the pose of neck and shoulder brings out the charm of the feminine, the delicate skin expresses its seductive note as of the fragrance of subtle moods. Whether he label his mood *Innocence* or *Fidelity*, whether girls weep over a dead bird or broken mirror or discarded flowers, with eyes tear-filled at a cracked egg or broken jug, the emotion aimed at is always the allure of woman. And as his art ripened his girls stepped over the edge of life into full womanhood, with beautiful heads, in *Love-Dreams*, *Bacchantes*, *Volupté*, *Flora*, *Desire*, in which the title is still but the guide to the allure of woman. He is "a moralist with a passion for lovely shoulders; a preacher who reveals the bosoms of young girls."

WHEREIN A HANDSOME DANDY IS SEEN TO ESSAY THE HOMELY, BUT CATCHES THE ALLURE OF GIRLHOOD

Now much sought after, the elegant fellow's conceit knew no bounds. All the great world flowed through his studio; and he would show his own works, lauding them with praise that raised sly laughter.

The strongest side of the art of Greuze is to be seen in his portraits, which are all too lightly passed by. His *Man with a Pan* at the Louvre is a remarkable work. In his portraiture he employed a low tone, but rich and glowing, in marked contrast with his pictures of girls; and thereby displayed an innate genius for style. *Wille*, who, by engraving him, gave him so wide a fame, the painter *Sylvestre* and the sculptor *Pigalle* he painted in well-known portraits. The Louvre has his low-toned *Jeaurat*, the painter. His repute led to his painting the *Dauphin* and several of the great. Portraiture brought out an

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

astounding grip of character in Greuze which one had little suspected. In the portraiture of women, of the *Marquise de Chauvelin* and of his own beautiful wife in particular, he won deservedly high repute.

The conceit of the man was as vile an enemy to his career as was his miserable marriage. The Dauphin, delighted with his portrait, asks him to paint the Dauphiness who stood beside him; and Greuze boorishly replied that he could not paint the powder and paint that women employed on their faces. The royal favour chilled; and the vulgar retort probably delayed the king's offer of apartments at the Louvre.

Greuze had delayed painting his "piece of reception" for years, until at the end of fourteen years he was at last sharply ordered to do it (1769), being warned that he would be forbidden to show at the Salon otherwise. He set to work on his "historical picture," after writing an impertinent letter to the Academy. The poor result may be seen in his skied *Septimus Severus* at the Louvre. The Academy could not refuse it, but they censured him for it, and received him in a lower grade. Greuze was furious, sulked for days, neither sleeping nor eating, but writing letters to the papers to prove his work a masterpiece. His faithful Diderot struck at him. Sure now of apartments at the Louvre, he swore he would never again send a work to the royal Salons; and he never did. He had been granted the apartments at the Louvre in the March of 1769; he was at his prime, a handsome man, of the middle height, with a dignified manner and an air of distinction. The Louvre holds two portraits of *Himself*. A fine talker, elegant in his habits and manners, well dressed, he would receive the great ones of France at his studio; whilst his scandalous wife was making him the talk of the gossips.

Madame Roland has left us record of seeing there his famous *Cruche cassée* (the Broken Pitcher), now at the Louvre, then freshly wrought upon the canvas. The Louvre *Danaë* and the Wallace *L'Offrande à l'Amour* are of these years. Of his scenes of Home Life were *La Paix du Ménage*, *La Mère*

Bien-Aimée, *Le Goûter*, in all of which he dwells on the happiness of motherhood, and the *Infant sent to Nurse*, with its pendant *The Return from Nurse*. Engravings sent these works broadcast. He poured out these subjects of happy motherhood, as though to find in the imagination that comfort that his own home lacked. Favoured by princes, the envy of the studios, earning vast sums of money, Greuze was now at the height of his vogue; and the Emperor Joseph II put the crown upon his honours by commanding a picture, sending a present of 4000 ducats, and making him a baron.

WHEREIN A HANDSOME DANDY IS SEEN TO ESSAY THE HOMELY, BUT CATCHES THE ALLURE OF GIRLHOOD

But the skeleton in his cupboard was rattling too loudly to keep the world from hearing. The squandering of an enormous sum of money by her drew a demand for an explanation at last from the exasperated man; she said it had gone down at sea, but refused the name of the captain or the ship. Then caricatures and squibs were openly published, jesting at her adulteries and his complacency. Then he was compelled to give up his apartments at the Louvre. His patience gave way; in 1785 he separated from her.

But the black shadow of the Revolution was threatening France. Bank after bank failed, and took Greuze's hard-earned wealth. The monarchy fell, and his pension went with it. He painted several portraits of the great leaders of the Revolution—*Danton*, *Robespierre*, *Gensonné*, *Fabre d'Eglantine*, *Dumourier*, *Josephine de Beauharnais*. Out of the welter, to the Salon of the Republican year VIII, he sent some seventeen works, only to awake and find himself wholly out of fashion. David was lord of art. Greuze wrote to the papers, all in vain, to prove his moral aim in art. None would listen. He tried to catch the new vogue with his *Ariadne at Naxos*, and suffered sneers. The once dandy now wore frayed clothes. But the pride of the man and his dignity remained. He dreaded more for his daughters than himself. "I am ready for the journey," he said to his friend Barthélemy, before he died. "Good-bye. You will be all alone at my funeral, like the beggar's dog." So he died on the 21st of March 1805. As his dead body,

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

followed by two mourners, passed, a weeping woman, closely veiled in black, placed a wreath of immortelles on his coffin, with the legend: "These flowers, offered by the most grateful of his pupils, are the emblem of his glory."

Greuze had many faults. He too often, led by the critics, mistook the art of painting for the art of literature. He mistook art for morality—one is not sure that sometimes he did not mistake it for an immorality. But the contempt that is flung at him to-day is stupid. He *was* an artist, and when he answered to his right instincts, and uttered his emotions, he stepped amongst the immortals. He could express the allure of flesh in astounding fashion, above all, the subtle allure of dawning womanhood. When he said "Be piquant, if you cannot be true," he underrated himself. He glorified the simple lives of the humble, and, however sentimentally he did it, he probed serious and spiritual things. He caught the purity of little children, and their fascination. He painted fine portraiture. And he drew on to his canvas the subtle spirit of dawning womanhood in an exquisite way that, spite of its occasional tricks, has never been approached by other hands. Nobody spoke the word Maidenhood with such exquisite voice as poor, soul-racked, plagued Jean Baptiste Greuze.

CHAPTER XXIII

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

FRAGONARD
1732 – 1806

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

At Grasse, high amongst the Sea-Alps that fringe the blue waters of the Mediterranean, in romantic Provence, was born to a glove-maker of the little town, on the 5th of April 1732, a son whom they christened Jean Honoré Fragonard.

The small boy with the big head was born the year after François Boucher came back to Paris from his Italian wanderings. The child grew up in his Provençal home, whilst Boucher was creating his Pastorals, Venus-pieces, and Cupid-pieces that, following on the revelation of Watteau, were changing the whole style of French art to national utterance; whilst Chardin was creating masterpieces that uttered the home-life of the people. For sixteen years the lad lived in the sun-flooded, flower-sprent glory of his mountain home; and the glory of it bathed his young eyes and heart, so that his hands got them itching to create the splendour of it which sang within him. The wizardry of the flower-garden of France never left him, casting its spell over all his thinking, and calling to him to utter it to the world. It stole into his colour-box and on to his palette, and so across the canvas into his master-work, and was to lead him through the years to a blithe immortality. Whether financial ruin fell upon the worthy glove-maker at Grasse and sent him with his family to Paris in the young Fragonard's eighteenth year, or whether, in the boy's fifteenth year—the Pompadour had been the king's acknowledged mistress a couple of years—there fell like bolt from the blue on the large-headed, small-bodied youth,

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

the news that his father, tearing aside the lad's dreams, had articled him as junior clerk to a notary, to a notary he went, and idled his master into despair, "wasting his time" on paint-pots and pencil-scribblings until the notary advised the father to let the young fellow follow his bent. It is said that in his sixteenth year the youth's mother, with all a French mother's shrewdness and common-sense, gathered together the youth's sketches, and that she sought out the first painter of the day, and burst with the shy youth into the studio of large-hearted, generous, much-sinning, famous Boucher—he was then living in the Rue Grenelle-Saint-Honoré, in which Fragonard was to end his days. The lad glanced with wonder at the master's works whilst his mother poured forth her hopes for her son. Boucher, looking over the lad's work, told him to come back to him in six months, advising the mother to take him to Chardin meanwhile as the supreme master of painting, that he might learn to handle the tools of his craft. And to Chardin the youth went.

Chardin set him to paint at once, in sienna, copying prints from masterpieces of his day, insisting on his painting large and broad and solid and true. Fragonard made so little headway that Chardin sent him packing out of his studio. Thrown upon his own resources, the young fellow haunted the churches of Paris, brooded over the masterpieces that hung therein, and, returning to his lodging, painted them, day by day, from memory. At the end of six months he called again on Boucher, his sketches under his arm, and this time he was not sent away. Astounded at his progress, struck by his enthusiasm, Boucher took him into his studio, and set him to work to prepare the large decorative cartoons from his own paintings for use at the Gobelins and the Beauvais looms. After a couple of years' training, Boucher, with that keen interest that he ever took in his pupils, urged the young fellow to compete for the Prix de Rome; and at twenty, without preparation, Fragonard won the coveted prize with his *Jeroboam sacrificing to Idols.* It was the year that Boucher was granted

XXI

FRAGONARD

1732 – 1806

"THE FAIR-HAIRED CHILD"

(WALLACE COLLECTION)

In the Wallace Collection is the exquisite little portrait, a harmony in white and pale yellow and silvery greys, which displays all the fine poetic qualities of Fragonard's handling of paint and his mastery of colour. It is said to be his own small son.

apartments at the Louvre. For three years thereafter, Fragonard was in the king's school of six *élèves protéges* under Carle van Loo, continuing to work in Boucher's studio, as well as painting on his own account such works as his *Blind Man's Buff*.

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

At twenty-four he was entitled to go to Rome at the king's expense; and started on his journey into Italy with Boucher's now famous farewell advice in his ears: "My dear Frago, you go to Italy to see the works of Raphael and Michelangelo; but—I tell you in confidence, as a friend—*if* you take those fellows seriously you are lost." This advice has always shocked the critic and the prig; it was only Boucher's waggish way of stating a valuable warning that a Frenchman must learn to speak French, not Italian—must learn to express himself, not to mimic the great dead. It was advice that might have saved, ah! so many broken careers.

Arrived in Rome, Fragonard, like his master before him, was torn with doubts and uncertainties and warring influences. For several months he did little or no work; he stood before the masterpieces of Michelangelo and Raphael, stirred by the grandeur of their design, and eager to paint, but too much of a Frenchman to be affected creatively by them. His hesitations saved him, and won France a master in her long roll of fame. Warned by his master, he escaped the taint of learning to see through the eyes of others, evaded the Italian accent. Watteau for him, as for Boucher, had not lived in vain. Rome was not to be his grave, as it has been the grave of so many promising sons of art; he came out of the danger a strong and healthy man. Tiepolo guided him back to his own age; and the French utterance of his master Boucher called back his dazed wits to the utterance of France. At last the genius that was in him quickened, and strove to utter itself.

The bright colours of Italy herself, the glamour of her landscapes, these were the real lessons that there bit into his imagination; and the eagerness to set them upon his canvas gave to his hand's skill an ordered grace and dignity that were of more vital effect upon his achievement than the paintings of the

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

great dead. So it came about that NATOIRE, now director of the royal school in the Villa Mancini, who had written his distress concerning the pupil to Marigny, was soon writing enthusiastically of him, and procured him a lengthening of his stay in Rome.

Here began that life-long friendship with HUBERT ROBERT, already making his mark as artist, and with the charming Abbé de Saint-Non, who was to engrave the work of the young painters, and whose influence procured him free residence in the Villa d'Este, where the other two joined him. So two years passed pleasantly along in pleasant good-fellowship at the Villa d'Este, the majestic trees and running waters of which made so profound an impression upon Fragonard, bringing him a profound sense of dignity and a knowledge of light and air that were to bathe the scenes he was to paint with such rare skill and insight. Here grew that love of stately gardens which are the essence of his landscapes, and which won to the heart of a child of Provence.

From distant Paris he heard of the backstairs intrigue that brought Choiseul from the queen's party to the Pompadour; in the midst of disasters by sea and land the Pompadour persuaded the king to send for De Stainville and to make him Prime Minister. Created Duc de Choiseul in December 1758, he had as ally one of the most astute and subtle and daring minds in France—his sister Beatrice, the famous Duchesse de Grammont. The king found in him a born leader of men. Choiseul brought back dignity to the throne. He came near to saving France. Choiseul was the public opinion of the nation. He founded his strength on Parliament and on the New Philosophy. He became a national hero. He could do no wrong. He rose to power in 1758, and at once stemmed the tide of disaster to France. The Parliament men took courage. Philosophy, with one of its men in power, spoke out with no uncertain voice. All France was listening.

Fragonard had at last to turn homewards; and the two friends, with Saint-Non, dawdling through Italy by way of Bologna and

Venice, worked slowly towards Paris. Fragonard entered his beloved city, after five wander-years, in the autumn of 1761, in his twenty-ninth year, untainted and unspoiled by academic training, his art founded on that of Boucher, enhanced by his keen study of Nature. He reached Paris rich in plans for pictures, filled with ardour and enthusiasm for his art, ambitious to create masterpieces, and burning to distinguish himself.

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

II

Fragonard came back to Paris on the eve of his thirtieth year to find his master, Boucher, a changed man. He was growing old; his art was being assailed by the critics; the New Philosophy was demanding of art that it should give forth ennobling sentiments from the painted canvas, and should teach a moral lesson. They were beginning to speak of the great antique days of Greece and Rome. Fickle fashion was about to turn her back upon Dresden shepherds and shepherdesses and leafy groves, to account Chardin's home-life as "low," and to take up her abode awhile with heroes amongst picturesque ruins.

Arrived in Paris, Fragonard at once set to work upon an historic painting for the Academy, *The High Priest Coresus slaying himself to save Callirhoë*, still to be seen at the Louvre, which was hailed with high praise by the critics and academicians. For two years thereafter he essayed the academic style. But the praises of Diderot and Grimm failed to fill his pockets, and he decided to turn his back on critics' praise. He had no taste for academic art, no sympathy with ancient thought nor with the dead past. He was, like his master, a very son of France and of his age, glorying in his native land and in the life of his day.

His chance soon came, and in strange wise. A young blood at the Court, one Baron de Saint-Julien, went to the painter Doyen with his flame and asked him to paint a picture of the pretty creature being swung by a bishop whilst he himself watched the display of pretty ankles as the girl went flying

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

through the air. Doyen had scruples; but—recommended Fragonard for the naughty business. Fragonard seized the idea readily enough, using the incident, as usual, but as the trivial theme for a splendid setting amidst trees, glorying in the painting of foliage—as you may see at the Wallace—the world-famous *Les hazards heureux de l'Escarpolette*, that brought Fragonard at a leap into the vogue, and gave the world a masterpiece.

The effect was prodigious. De Launay's wonderful engraving of it popularised it throughout the land, catching much of its wondrous wizardry of tree-painting. Nobles and rich financiers and the whole world of fashion eagerly sought canvases by Fragonard. Just as the ageing Boucher had been the mirror of France under the Pompadour, so Fragonard became the mirror of the Court, of the theatre, of the drawing-room and the boudoir under the Du Barry.

Finding a ready market for subjects of gallantry, he gave rein to his bent. The nobility and the rich were spendthrift in pictures. The pretty house, delicately tinted rooms, fine furniture, dainty decorations, and charming pictures were a necessity for such as would be in the fashion.

Fragonard's was an ardent brush, and he used it ardently. But always you shall find him using his subject, however questionable, as the mere excuse for a glorious picture of trees. He is one of the great landscape-painters of France. The smug writers on the art of France are in the habit of vaunting Fragonard over Boucher, with a hint that Boucher was a libidinous dog. As a matter of fact, Fragonard painted subjects so suggestive that Boucher's art seems chaste after them. He deliberately played with the naughtiness of sex. His artistry was closely founded on the art of Boucher, and owed much more to it than did Boucher's to that of Watteau. The shallow who deny Boucher originality must deny Fragonard even less. English critics seem incapable of understanding the French genius. Fragonard had many qualities that go to make a decorative painter. Indeed it is to the Frenchmen of the

seventeen-hundreds to whom we may safely go to make the walls of a drawing-room a delight. Fragonard's *La Fête de St. Cloud* is one of the decorative landscapes of the world.

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

He was now, in his first or detailed period, giving forth works in considerable numbers; the style and arrangement and handling are somewhat severe, the subjects ardent—*Love the Conqueror*, the *Bolt*, the *Fountain of Love*, *Le Serment d'Amour*, the *Gimblette*, *Les Baigneuses*, *Sleeping Bacchante*, the *Début du Modèle*, and the like.

His master, Boucher, was grown old, and could not carry out the orders given to him; it was to help his pupil, his "Frago," that he now introduced him to his old patron and friend, the wealthy farmer-general Bergeret de Grandcour, who became one of Fragonard's most lavish patrons and most intimate friends. He ordered several panels in this, Fragonard's thirty-fifth year—the year he painted his superb *Fête de St. Cloud*—towards the end of that first phase of minute and detailed painting which he achieved with such consummate skill, without marring the largeness of his conceptions with pettiness.

The Pompadour died in 1764. To Fragonard she had done no service. His art began to blossom when she was a worn-out and broken woman. Fragonard was never to come into close touch with the Court. There were two patrons for whom he was to create a series of masterpieces in the decoration of their splendid homes; both were women.

For the prodigal and eccentric dancer, the notorious Mademoiselle Guimard — she was the rage of Paris, and Fragonard is said to have been more than friend—he painted a series of panels for her house in the Chaussée d'Antin, known to the bloods as the Temple of Terpsichore. He also painted her portrait, for the same room, as an opera-shepherdess—the simple pastoral life was the pose of this unsimple class. Fragonard, never energetic, and dawdling by nature, seems to have dawdled over the business for several years; and the Guimard at last showed temper—she had a sharp tongue—and upbraided him,

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

adding the sneer that he would never be able to finish it; whereon, said he, "It *is* finished," and walked out of the house. She could never lure him back; but one day he slipped in and changed the set dancer's smile into a snarl. Before this breach he had painted several portraits of the Guimard. The work, however, was to have far-reaching results for Fragonard. To complete the room he secured David, then twenty-five; and David never forgot the service—he was to repay it tenfold when black days threatened in the years to come, and with rare courage, when even the courage of gratitude was a deadly dangerous act.

The famous *Chiffre d'Amour*, now at the Wallace, in which a girl cuts her lover's initials on a tree, was one of Fragonard's happiest inspirations of this time; at the Wallace also is *L'Heure de Berger*, redolent of Boucher.

Four years after the death of the Pompadour, died the neglected queen. On the Eve of Candlemas, the first day of February 1769, at a convivial party in Paris that was not wholly without political significance, a Jesuit priest raised his glass *To the Presentation!* adding after the toast—"To that which has taken place to-day, or will take place to-morrow, the presentation of the new Esther, who is to replace Haman and release the Jewish nation from oppression." He spoke figuratively—it was safer so; but 'twas understood, and the pretty sentiment was well received by the old aristocrats and young bloods about the table; they drank a bumper to the pretty *Madame* du Barry. For the Jesuits had no love for the *king's minister* Choiseul—and the madcap girl was but the lure whereby the king was to be drawn from his great minister. So Religion rallied about the frail beauty, and hid behind her extravagant skirts—one of which cost close on £2000—and, with the old nobility, drank damnation to the king's minister, and to the devil with the New Thought and with Parliaments! Long live the king and the divine right of kings! Our worthy priest seems to have had the ear of Destiny, though he dated his certainty near upon a couple of months too soon. Before the

XXII

FRAGONARD

1732 – 1806

"CHIFFRE D'AMOUR"

(WALLACE COLLECTION)

year was out, the old king was become the doting creature of a light-o'-love of Paris, the transfigured milliner and street-pedlar, Jeanne, natural child of one Anne Béqus, a low woman of Vaucouleurs. Jeanne, of no surname and unknown father, a pretty, kindly, vulgar child of the gutters, with fair hair and of madcap habits, was some twenty-six years of age, when—being reborn under a forged birth-certificate at the king's ordering, as Anne de Vaubernier, and being married by the same orders to an obliging nobleman of the Court—she appeared at Versailles as the immortally frail Countess du Barry. The king's infatuation brought royalty into utter contempt among the people. It was to cost France a terrible price—and Fragonard not least of all.

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

One of the first gifts of the king to the Du Barry was the little château of Louveciennes; and she set to work with reckless extravagance to furnish the handsome home. Drouais, the artist, sold to her for 1200 livres, as overdoors for one of the rooms, four panels by Fragonard, now vanished; it led to Fragonard being ordered to decorate the pavilion there, where she entertained the king at her "little suppers." Thus it came about that for this light-o'-love Fragonard painted the five world-famous canvases of the sequence called *The Progress of Love in the Heart of Maidenhood*, now better known as *The Romance of Love and Youth*—the old king masquerading therein as a young shepherd, the Du Barry as a modest shepherdess. In *The Ladder* (*L'Escalade* or *Le Rendez-vous*) the Du Barry plays the timid girl who starts as she sees her shepherd-lover to be the king; the *Pursuit* follows; then the *Souvenirs* and *Love Crowned*. The last of the five, the Discarded Mistress in *Deserted*, was only begun, and was not completed by Fragonard until twenty years later, at Grasse, to complete the set.

What it was that struck a chill in the favour of the frail Du Barry is not fully known; but the masterpieces never entered her doors. Whether the king and his mistress found them lacking the suggestiveness of Fragonard's four overdoors—indeed, their trivial story is but the pretext for massy foliage and

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

majestic trees that spring into the swinging heavens—or whether Fragonard resented the suspicion that he was being set an artistic duel with Vien, whose suggestive designs were preferred, the discarded pictures lay in Fragonard's studio for over twenty years, where we shall see them, rolled up, making the chief part of his strange baggage in his flight from his beloved Paris.

Du Barry was of the gutter; she had the crude love of fineries of the girl of the gutters; she loved display. Into her house she brought the vulgar singers of the lowest theatres, where the Pompadour had brought the wits and leading artists of the age. The old culture was gone. The king laughed now at coarse, ribald songs, and was entertained by clowns.

III

There lived at Grasse, with its fragrant harvest of flowers, and given to the distilling of perfumes therefrom, a family that had come from Avignon, its name Gérard, on friendly terms with the Fragonards. The seventeen-year-old Marie Anne Gérard was sent to Paris, to the care of Fragonard, to earn her living in the shop of a scent-seller, one Isnard. The girl had a gift for painting fans and miniatures. Who better than Fragonard to teach her? She was no particular beauty as Fragonard's picture of her proves, with the rough accent of Provence, thick-set and clumsy of figure, heavy of feature, but she had youth and health. She and Fragonard would talk of home; they fell a-kissing; and Fragonard, now thirty-seven, married the girl in her eighteenth year. She bore him a much-loved daughter, Rosalie—and ten years later, in 1780, a son, Alexandre Evariste Fragonard. There came to live with the newly-married couple his wife's younger sister Marguerite Gérard, and her young brother Henri Gérard, who was learning engraving.

Fragonard's marriage at once affected his art. The wild oats of his art were near sown. The naughtinesses of girls of pleasure gave place to the grace and tenderness of the home-life—the cradle took the place of the bed of light adventures; children

blossomed on to his canvases. He set aside the make-believe shepherds and shepherdesses of the vogue; henceforth he painted the "real thing" in rural surroundings. He brought to his homeliest pictures a beauty of arrangement, a sense of style, and a dignity worthy of the most majestic subjects. He came at this time under the influence of the Dutch landscape-painters and stole from them the solidity of their massing in foliage, the truth of their character-drawing, the close observation of their cattle and animal-life, their cloudy skies, and the finish and force of their craftsmanship. Whether he went into Holland is disputed; he was too keen an artist, his was too original a genius, to imitate their style or take on their Dutch accent; he simply took from them such part of their craftsmanship as could enter into the facile gracious genius of France without clogging its grace. And he looked upon the wondrous art of Chardin. He is henceforth content with his house and garden for scenery, with his family for models. He realises that an artist has no need to search abroad to find "paintable things." The *Heureuse Fécondité*, the *Visit to the Nurse* (the second work of the name), the *Schoolmistress*, the *Good Mother*, the *Retour au logis*, *L'Education fait tout*, the *Dites donc, s'il vous plaît*, are of this period. In all he did he proves himself an artist, incapable of mediocrity, bringing distinction to whatsoever he touches. Fragonard also excelled in miniature portraits in oils; the fancy portraits at the Louvre show a breadth and force which prove that he had looked upon the art of Frans Hals—the *Figure de Fantaisie* (or *Inspiration*), *La Musique*, show the influence; and the pretty woman in *La Chanteuse* is painted in bodice, cuffs, and high ruffle, "dragged in" from Hals's day. The Louvre *Music Lesson* is of this time.

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

The year after Fragonard's marriage, his old master Boucher died—the light of the "Glory of Paris" went out. Boucher died a few months before that Christmas Eve of 1770 that saw Choiseul driven from power by the trio of knaves who used the vulgar but kindly Du Barry as their tool—indeed, she refused to pull the great minister down until she had made

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

handsome terms on his behalf. Choiseul was too astute a man not to see what lay beyond the shadow of her pretty skirts—nay, does he not turn in the courtyard as he leaves the palace, to go into banishment, his *lettre de cachet* in his pocket, and, seeing a woman looking out from a window at the end of an alley, bow and kiss his hand to where gazes out of tear-filled eyes this strange doomed beauty who has won to the sceptre of France? For four years this girl of the gutter, with her precious trio, d'Aiguillon, Maupeou, and Terray, sent the members of Parliament into banishment—years that launched royal France on its downward rushing, with laughter and riot, to its doom, whilst the apathetic king shrugged his royal shoulders at all hint of catastrophe, which he was not witless enough nor blind not to foresee. "Things, as they were, would last as long as he; and he that came after him must shift for himself," said he cynically; and shrugging his shoulders, repeated the Pompadour's saying, "*Après nous le déluge.*" Wit and ruthless fatuity were the order of the day; these folk were wondrous full of the neatly turned phrase and the polished epigram; and most fatuous of them all, and as ruthless as any, was Terray—he who tinkered with finance, with crown to his many infamies the scandalous *Pacte de Famille*, that mercantile company that was to produce an artificial rise in the price of corn by buying up the grain of France, exporting it, and bringing it back for sale at vast profit—with Louis of France as considerable shareholder; indeed, had not the owners of the land the right to do what they would with their own? Yet Louis of France spake prophecy. The guillotine was not to have him. In 1774 he was stricken down with the small-pox, and the sick-room in the palace saw the Du Barry and her party fight a duel with Choiseul's party for his possession. On the 10th of May the small-pox took the distempered body, "already a mass of corruption," that was hastily flung into a coffin and hurried without pomp or pretence of honour to St. Denis—being rattled thereto at the trot, the crowd showering epigrams not wholly friendly upon its passing—and was buried

XXIII

FRAGONARD
1732 – 1806

"THE SCHOOLMISTRESS"

(WALLACE COLLECTION)

After his marriage Fragonard's brush turned to the glorification of family life.

amongst the bones of the ancient kings of his race, unattended by the Court, and amidst the loud curses of the people.

The scandalous levity of the privileged class and its ruthless vindictiveness when thwarted, had near done their work. The pens of the wits and thinkers sent the New Thought broadcast amongst a people wholly scandalised and punished by the corruption of their governors. These writings made astounding and alarming way. The "intellectuals" were all on the side of the people. With wit and sarcasm and invective and argument they stirred passions, appealing to self-respect and dignity and honour and the innate love of freedom in the strong; they appealed to common-sense, to the craving for liberty in man's being, to the rights of the individual; and the printing-press scattered their wit and wisdom throughout the land to the uttermost corners of France. They sneered away false aristocracy, false religion. They wrought to overthrow the old order, and brought it into contempt.

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

Yet the Du Barry had no grain of ill-will in her nature. During her reign the Bastille received no prisoner at her ordering; vengeance was not in her. She was the tool of scoundrels; she even came between them and their base vengeances, and freed the Court of the brutalities that the Pompadour meted out to her enemies. Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette came to the throne; and even the new king, whose sharp *lettre de cachet*, written two days after he came to power, banished her to a convent, soon relented and allowed her back to Luciennes. The new king brought a sense of decency into public affairs.

Louis the Sixteenth ascended the throne in his twentieth year, a pure-minded young fellow, full of good intentions, sincerely anxious for the well-being of his people; but of a diffident, hesitating, and timid will, and under the influence of a young consort, the beautiful Queen Marie Antoinette, of imperious temper and light and frivolous mind, who brought to her counsels a deplorable lack of judgment.

Fragonard's name will always be linked with that of his

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

wealthy patron, the farmer-general Bergeret de Grandcour. And now, in his forty-second year, the artist went as his guest, for his second journey into Italy, went this time in the grand manner, amidst extravagant luxury, advising in the purchase of art treasures, being received by the ambassador and the highest society. He went to a concert "chez le lord Hamilton," saw and spoke with Nelson's Emma, Lady Hamilton. It was at Naples that news came of the death of Louis the Fifteenth. The party turned homewards, going in leisurely fashion by way of Venice, Vienna, and Germany. The journey's ending saw a bitter breach between the two men. Bergeret de Grandcour claimed and held all Fragonard's sketches, to the artist's consternation, as payment for the journey; and only through the law-courts did Fragonard recover them. However, reconciliation followed; and De Grandcour's son became one of Fragonard's closest and most intimate friends.

In a happy hour, Fragonard was given apartments at the Louvre by the young king. There, with his wife, his girl Rosalie, his son and his talented sister-in-law Marguerite Gérard, he lived happy and well-to-do, making large sums of money, and enjoying the society of the group of brilliant men who lived about him. Marguerite Gérard, gay and distinguished in manners and beautiful, as his jovial wife was vulgar and coarse, the young woman's friendship became an ever-increasing delight to the ageing painter. Their correspondence when apart was passionately affectionate. Ugly scandals got abroad. The girl was of a cold nature enough as displayed by her last letters, when, in reply to Fragonard, evil days having fallen upon him and he was ruined and old, she answered his appeal for money with a refusal and a trite sermon "to practise economy, be reasonable, and remember that in brooding over fancies one only increases them without being any the happier." But this was not as yet. Happy and free from cares, amongst devoted friends, Fragonard reached his fifty-fifth year when he had suddenly to gaze horrified at the cruelty of the Great Reaper—he reeled under the first blow

of his life—his bright, witty, winsome daughter Rosalie died in her eighteenth year.

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

But a blacker, vaster shadow came looming. In an unfortunate moment for the royal house, and against the will of the king and of Neckar, the nation went mad with enthusiasm over England's revolted American colonies; and the alliance was formed by which France swore not to make peace until America was declared independent. It started the war with England. The very successes of the revolted colonies made the Revolution in France a certainty. The fall of Neckar and the rise of the new minister, Calonne, sent France rushing to the abyss. The distress of the people became unbearable. The people had watched the Revolution in America, and seen it victorious. The fall of Calonne but led to the rise of the turbulent and stupid Cardinal de Brienne; and the Court was thoroughly foul of the people when De Brienne threw up office and fled across the frontier, leaving the government in utter confusion. The king recalled Neckar. The calling of the States-General became assured. Paris rang with the exultation of the Third Estate.

The States-General met at Versailles on the 5th of May 1789. The monarchy was at an end. In a little over a month the States-General created themselves into the National Assembly. The Revolution was begun. The 14th of July saw the fall of the Bastille. On the 22nd the people hanged Foulon to the street-lamp at the corner of the Place de Grève—and *à la lanterne!* became the cry of fashion.

Fragonard was in his fifty-seventh year when he heard in his lodging at the Louvre the thunderclap of this 14th of July 1789—saw the dawn of the Revolution. The rose of the dawn was soon to turn blood-red; it came responsive to the rattle of musketry in the far West, hard by Boston harbour.

Fragonard and his friends were of the independents—they were liberals whom love of elegance had not prevented from sympathising with the sufferings of the people, and who had thrilled with the New Thought. Fragonard's intelligence and

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

instincts drew him towards the new ideas; indeed, he owed little to the Court; and when France was threatened by the coalition of Europe against her, he, with Gérard, David, and others, went on the 7th of September with the artist's womenfolk to give up their jewellery to the National Assembly.

But the storm burst, and soon affairs became tragic red. There came, for the ruin of the crown and to end the last hope of the Court, the unfortunate death of Mirabeau—the hesitations of the king—his foolish flight to Varennes—his arrest.

The constitutional party in the Legislative Assembly, at first dominant, became subordinate to the more violent but more able *Girondists*, with their extreme wing of *Jacobins* under Robespierre, and *Cordeliers* under Danton, Marat, Camille Desmoulins, and Fabre d'Eglantine. The proscription of all emigrants quickly followed. It was as unsafe to leave as to stay in Paris. The queen's insane enmity towards Lafayette finished the king's business. On the night of the 9th of August the dread tocsin sounded the note of doom to the royal cause—herald to the bloodshed of the morrow. Three days afterwards the king and the royal family were prisoners in the Temple.

The National Convention met for the first time on the 21st of September 1792, decreed the First Year of the Republic, abolished royalty and the titles of courtesy, decreed in their place *citoyen* and *citoyenne*, and the use of *tu* and *toi* for *vous*. The meeting of the National Convention also revealed the enmity of the two wings of the now all-powerful Girondist party—the Girondists and the Jacobins or Montagnards. The conflict began with the quarrel as to whether the king could be tried. The 10th of January 1793 saw the king's head fall to the guillotine—the Jacobins had triumphed. War with Europe followed, and the deadly struggle between the Girondists and Jacobins for supreme power. The 27th of May 1793 witnessed the appointment of the terrible and secret Committee of Public Safety. By June the Girondists had wholly fallen. Charlotte Corday's stabbing of Marat in his bath left the way clear

for Robespierre's ambition. The Jacobins in power, the year of the Reign of Terror began—July 1793 to July 1794—with Robespierre as the lord of the hellish business. The scaffolds reeked with blood—from that of Marie Antoinette and Egalité Orléans to that of the Girondist deputies and Madame Roland, and the most insignificant beggar suspected of the vague charge of "hostility to the Republic." In a mad moment the Du Barry, who had shown the noblest side of her character in befriending the old allies of her bygone days of splendour, published a notice of a theft from her house—it drew all eyes to her wealth—and she, too, went to the guillotine, shrieking with terror and betraying all who had protected her. Then came strife among the Jacobins. Robespierre and Danton fought the scoundrel Hébert for life and overthrew him—the Hébertists went to the guillotine, dying in abject terror. Danton, with his appeals for cessation of the bloodshed of the Terror, alone stood between Robespierre and supreme power. Danton, Camille Desmoulins, d'Eglantine, and their humane fellows were sent to the guillotine. Between the 10th of June and the 27th of July in 1794 fourteen hundred people in Paris alone died on the scaffold.

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

Fragonard dreaded to fly from the tempest. It was as safe to stay in Paris as to leave the city. Any day he might be taken. Sadness fell upon him and ate into his heart. The old artist could not look without uneasiness upon the ruin of the aristocracy, of the farmers-general, and of the gentle class, now in exile or under trial—his means of livelihood thereby utterly gone. Without hate for royalty or for the Republic, the artists, by birth plebeian and in habits bourgeois, many of them old men, could but blink with fearful eyes at the vast upheaval. Their art was put completely out of fashion. A new art, solemn and severe, classical and heroic, was born. For half a century the charming art of France of the eighteenth century was to lie wholly buried—a thing of contempt wherever it showed above the ashes.

Fragonard's powerful young friend David, the painter, now

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

stood sternly watchful over the old man's welfare; and David was at the height of his popularity—a member of the Convention. He showed his friendship publicly, visited Fragonard regularly, secured him his lodging at the Louvre, and secured his election to the Jury of the Arts created to replace the Royal Academy.

But the old artist was bewildered.

The national enthusiasm was not in him. The artists were ruined by the destruction of their pensions. The buyers of their pictures were dispersed, their power and money gone, their favour dissipated. The new school uprooted all Fragonard's settled ideals. He strove to catch the new spirit, and failed. He helped to plant a tree of liberty in the courtyard of the Louvre, meditating the while how he could be gone from Paris. The glories of the Revolution alarmed the old man. He saw the kin of his friends dragged off to the guillotine. He had protected himself by giving his bond early in 1794, the year of the Terror, that he had no intention to emigrate, and avowing his citizenship to the Republic. But friends were taken in the night—no man knew when or where the blow might fall—Hubert Robert was seized and flung into Saint Lazare, escaping death by an accident. The misery and want amongst the artists and their families was pitiable. Fragonard gladly snatched at the invitation of an old friend of his family, Monsieur Maubert, to go to him at Grasse.

Shortly after that Sunday in December when the Du Barry went shrieking to her hideous death at the guillotine, Fragonard, turning his face to the South of his birth, was rolling up amongst his baggage the four finished canvases of *The Romance of Love and Youth*, and the unfinished fifth canvas *Deserted*, ordered and repudiated by the Du Barry; and, bundling his family into a chaise, was lumbering out of Paris through the guards at the gates, making for his friend's house at Grasse.

There, far away from the din and strife, Fragonard set up his world-famous decorative panels in the salon of his host's

house, painting for the overdoors *Love the Conqueror*, *Love-folly*, *Love pursuing a Dove*, *Love embracing the Universe*, and a panel over the fireplace of the *Triumph of Love*. He also painted the portraits of *the brothers Maubert*; and, to save his host from harm, he decorated the vestibule with revolutionary emblems—the Phrygian bonnet, axes and faggots, the masks of Robespierre and the Abbé Gregoire, and the like trickings of red Republicanism. The room and its decorations are now in America.

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

Meanwhile, able and resolute men had determined that Robespierre and the Terror must end. Robespierre went to the guillotine. The Revolution of the Ninth Thermidor put an end to the Terror in July 1794.

All this time the armies of France were winning the respect of the world by their gallantry and skill. The 23rd of September 1795 saw France establish the Directory—the 5th of October, the Day of the Sections, saw the stiff fight about the church of St. Roch, and Napoleon Bonaparte appointed second-in-command of the army. The young general was soon commander-in-chief. And France thenceforth advanced, spite of the many blunders of the Directory, with all the genius of her race, to the splendid recovery of her fortunes, and to a greatness which was to be the wonder and admiration and dread of the world. The Revolution of the 18th and 19th of Brumaire (9th and 10th of November 1799), destroyed the Directory and set the people's idol, Napoleon Bonaparte, at the helm of her mighty state.

To Paris Fragonard crept back, with his family, to his old quarters at the Louvre, when Napoleon was come to power, and the guillotine was slaked with blood. He returned to Paris a poor old man. The enthusiasm was gone out of his invention; the volition out of his hand's cunning; the breath out of his career. He was out of the fashion; a man risen from the dead. His efforts to catch the spirit of the time were pathetic. The gods of elegance were dead; a severe and frigid morality stood upon their altars. What were the heroic splendour of Greece and Rome to him?

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

We have a pen-picture of the old painter at this time—short, big of head, stout, full-bodied, brisk, alert, ever gay; red of cheek, pitted with small-pox, sparkling of eye, his grey hair very much frizzed out, he was to be seen wandering about the Louvre dressed in an overcoat of mixed grey cloth, without hooks or eyes or buttons—a coat which, when at work, he ties at the waist with a piece of string or crumpled chiffon—it matters not what. Every one loved "little father Fragonard." Through every stroke of good or evil fortune he remains alert and cheerful. The old face smiles even through tears.

So, shuffling with ageing step through the splendid years of Napoleon's rise to greatness, he walks, until, in 1806, the artists' lodgings at the Louvre are suppressed by decree of the Emperor. The Fragonards went to live hard by in the house of the restaurant-keeper Very, in the Rue Grenelle Saint-Honoré that had known Boucher well. The old artist walks now more sluggishly; his four-and-seventy years have taken the briskness out of his step. Returning from the Champ de Mars on a sultry day in August he becomes heated—enters a café to eat an ice—congestion of the brain sets in. At five of the clock on the morning of the 22nd of August 1806, Fragonard enters into eternal sleep at the hour at which his master Boucher had gone to rest.

Madame Fragonard lived to be seventy-seven, dying in 1824. MARGUERITE GÉRARD had a happy career as an artist under the Empire and the Restoration, but never married—dying at seventy-six, loaded with honours and in comfortable circumstances in 1837.

Fragonard fell into neglect, with Watteau and Chardin and Boucher and Greuze for goodly company; but, with them, is come into his own again. To understand the France of the seventeen-hundreds it is necessary to understand the art of Watteau, of Chardin, of Boucher and of Fragonard. Of its pictured romance, Watteau and Boucher and Fragonard hold the keys. Of the glamour of the home-life, Chardin and

Fragonard uttered the lyric intensity. Watteau states the France of light airs and gaiety and pleasant prospects, tinged with sweet melancholy and haunted with pathos; Boucher fulfils the century; Fragonard utters its swan's note. The art of Fragonard embodies the evening of a century of the life of France, uttering its blithe note, yet not wholly disregarding the deeps as did the art of his two great forerunners. He links the recklessness of the age to its more serious significance and joins hands with the immortal genius of Chardin.

WHEREIN WE SEE GENIUS EQUALLY AT HOME IN THE LAND OF WATTEAU AND THE REALM OF THE HOMELY, BUT BAFFLED BY THE ANTIQUE

LÉPICIÉ

1735 – 1784

NICOLAS BERNARD LÉPICIÉ is one of the fine artists of those whose repute went down in the whirlwind of the Revolution, but whose gifts are only beginning to receive due recognition again. He rose to his highest flights in his paintings of the Home Life such as gave Chardin and Greuse and the later work of Fragonard the scope for the exercise of their art and opened the way to the utterance of Chardin's genius; and his skill in portraiture raises him to the rank of the best painters of the late years of Louis XV and the reign of Louis XVI. At times his art comes close to the achievement of Chardin. His efforts in the grand manner were a strain upon his powers for which he had not the flare. He had Greuze's and Fragonard's sense of atmosphere. There are signs that he is coming into a bookish "cult," since a recent writer who shows scant hint of understanding the real significance of art, has praised him with the egregious dispraise that he was "very sincerely above painting for the sake of attractive subjects"—as though some of the greatest masters had not painted attractive subjects; as though art had to do with the rejection of attractive subjects! The Louvre possesses his fine portrait of *Carle Vernet.*

CHAPTER XXIV

WHEREIN WE SEE THE CLASSIC RUIN ENTER INTO THE WATTEAU LANDSCAPE IN THE LATER SEVENTEEN-HUNDREDS

HUBERT ROBERT

1733 – 1808

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

Born in 1733 of prosperous burgess folk, and originally intended for the Church, Hubert Robert early showed artistic leanings; and was soon drifting towards the landscape style so characteristic of him, and so akin in many ways to the far different art of his friend Fragonard. He came to art at the parting of the ways from the school created by Watteau and the new movement wherein ruins displaced the French pastures. But his art was purified of the mere mechanical "ruin" school. He had some of that aerial vision, the poetry that lay in lights and shadows, and the colour faculty of Fragonard. Unfortunately Robert was one of the first painters of rank to fall under the classic glamour of the cold enthusiasm of Winckelmann, whose writings on art were turning men's minds to the grandeur of ancient classic days, largely aroused by the excavations at Herculaneum; so he came to make architecture play an important part in his landscapes.

At seventeen, in 1750, he was training for the Church, but he doggedly fought the design, and was soon at work under Slodtz, the sculptor, who, being but lately come from Rome, urged the young fellow to go there. The youth went in 1754 with introductions to Panini, the painter of architecture, under whose guidance he worked hard for five years, when his health gave way. But his work was creating respect from the French colony in Rome; he was admitted to the French Academy in Rome, then housed at the Villa Medici, and was so well reported upon that the Pompadour's "little brother" Marigny

sent an order for a picture by him. By 1760 he was travelling to Naples with the Abbé Saint-Non; and it was on their return to Rome that they met and struck up their friendship with the student Fragonard. Thereafter they travelled about and lived together, and cemented that friendship which was to be life-long. Robert's influence upon Fragonard was as marked as that of Fragonard upon Robert, as may be seen in the Wallace *Gardens of a Roman Villa.* A typical landscape by Robert is the Dutuit *View in a Park*—fountains, water-basin, balconade, figures, and the trees at the back.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE CLASSIC RUIN ENTER INTO THE WATTEAU LAND-SCAPE IN THE LATER SEVEN-TEEN-HUNDREDS

The peaceful life Robert now lived won him back to his old robust health. A man of intense daring and bodily vigour and nerve, it was only necessary to dare him to some mad adventure to start him upon it. In Rome he is said to have climbed to the top of the Coliseum alone, without aid of ropes; to have walked the cornice of the dome of St. Peter's, and he narrowly escaped being lost in the Catacombs.

By 1762, his time of studentship at the Academy being ended, he went to Florence for two years to Le Bailly de Breteuil, the Maltese Ambassador; thence, by way of Rome, he came to Paris in 1765, to be hailed with enthusiasm by the Academy, and was admitted and received on the same day, like Chardin before him. In 1767 he married Anne Gabrielle Soos, daughter of an army surgeon. An affectionate husband, deeply attached to a wife as deeply attached to him, he lived a happy, prosperous life, to which the first blow was dealt by Fate at the Revolution, when he lost his four children. He won from the start the powerful backing of the critics Diderot and Bachaumont, and was the centre of a wide vogue. He was called to the decoration of salons, which he achieved with remarkable success—the which probably drew the criticism from Ingres, "but he is only a decorator."

Robert became Designer of the King's Gardens, and he was partner to Carmontel in laying out the Parc de Monceaux in Paris. One of his most famous works was the laying out of the *Bains d'Appollon*, the success of which brought him the

PRINCE CHARMING REIGNS OVER FRANCE

coveted apartments at the Louvre in 1780. Councillor of the Academy in 1784, he became Keeper to the Royal Collection.

But all these honours were to serve him ill. The black shadow of the Revolution was at hand. He was cast into the prison of St. Pelagie, largely at David's ordering, on the accusation of enmity to the Republic; he passed on to St. Lazare, where his genial nature served him well—and where, up at six in the morning, he painted until midday, then took exercise in the yard. He escaped with his life, for Robespierre fell, and David's power declined; and, the year of Terror over, he was in 1794 made one of the ten members of the new successor to the Academy, only to find his art out of fashion and his public gone. About 1802 he went to Italy. In 1808, two years after Fragonard went to his grave, his old friend followed him.

His widow outlived him thirteen years.

Hubert Robert, with Fragonard, carried on the Watteau vision, through Boucher, towards realism, and they stand on the threshold of the new movements of modern art. Hubert is, like Fragonard, seen to great advantage in his wash drawings.

MOREAU

1740–1806

There is a fine landscape at the Louvre by Louis Gabriel Moreau free from the classic vision, and more akin to the silvery and pearly atmosphere of the art of the Dutchmen. Moreau was a good deal in England; but, even so, was not able to rid his art wholly of the classic taint.

THE WINTER OF FRENCH ART

CHAPTER XXV

WHEREIN WE SEE THE FRENCH PORTRAIT ON THE EVE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION ESSAYING TO PLAY WITH THE ANTIQUE FRIGIDITY

Tocqué carried on the flame of the genius of France in portraiture from Nattier, and Drouais upheld the torch.

La Tour and Perronneau raised the portraiture of the age to the heights. Chardin, on the rare occasions when he turned to the portrait, brought to it the high distinction of his great art; Duplessis maintained the fine achievement of France; and Lépicié will one day be recognised at his value. Boucher, in his rare excursions into portraiture—above all, in his limpid, exquisitely lit, and beautiful portraits of the Pompadour and his superb child-portrait of *Egalité Orléans*, revealed remarkable gifts. Fragonard and Carle van Loo can scarcely be taken seriously in portraiture. But of all this group, the much-scorned Greuze stands out as one of the supreme, the most sincere, and the most masterly painters of the portrait of his age. We are not here concerned with all the scholastic twaddle about Vitality, and the rest of it. We are concerned with Art.

The century was to show sad decline in portraiture as its sands ran out. The art of a woman, Vigée Le Brun, in itself no mighty performance, must be accepted as the type of the new portraiture, for the fine work of Greuze was really of the preceding generation. But even Vigée Le Brun achieved character and movement in her best work.

VIGÉE LE BRUN

1755 - 1842

To a mediocre amiable painter in the Rue Coquillière in Paris, Louis Vigée and his wife Jeanne Maissin, was born on the

10th of April in 1755 a girl-child, ELIZABETH LOUISE VIGÉE; and, by the whimsy of things, there was born in the same year in far-away Vienna, in the palace of the Emperors, a little princess whom they christened Marie Antoinette.

Little Elizabeth Vigée was early being trained by her fond father, lived in the atmosphere of artists, and was soon the infant prodigy. The father died on the 9th of May 1768 from swallowing a fish-bone, leaving the thirteen-year-old child to grieve bitterly for him, in that year that Louis the Fifteenth's poor neglected queen lay down and died. The child, watched over by her father's old friend, the painter Doyen, entered the studio of Gabriel Briard, the Academician. The child rapidly developed in skill of artistry and towards womanhood, and in wit; and at fifteen she was so advanced in her craft that she was the talk of the town, and Briard had to gaze dumbfounded at the stream of the great ones of the day flocking to the girl's studio. In this same year, the fifteen-year-old Maria Antoinette left the palace of her forefathers in tears on the journey to France to her marriage that was to lead to her tragic wayfaring as Queen of France.

Elizabeth Vigée's rapid rise to repute brought her the friendship of Joseph Vernet, who advised her not to follow the style of any school, but to consult only the works of great Italian and Flemish masters, and, above all, that Nature was the supreme master. Doyen and Greuze also admired her. Ardent and enthusiastic, she haunted the galleries and studied Nature. To her was never given the deep insight into character; she set her sitters in the drawing-room of fashion, and painted them in their drawing-room manner. But to-day they would snatch even her good qualities from her, and a shrewish pen has even taunted her with being "effeminate"! Convention is the basis of a woman's life—she is taught to shrink from the realities as immodest things—and in the smug outward demeanour of life, with the curtain close drawn across the inner sanctuary, she is bred from infancy to the grave to believe. Convention in her art is, in that, therefore true.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE FRENCH PORTRAIT ON THE EVE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION ESSAYING TO PLAY WITH THE ANTIQUE FRIGIDITY

At fifteen, then, this girl found herself famous. The great of the French Court visited her. In spite of her astounding industry, she found herself unable to carry out her orders for portraits. Just before her fifteenth birthday, her handsome mother married a young jeweller, Le Sevre, a miserly fellow, who hired a little house at Chaillot where they all went to spend their Sundays. His petty tyrannies and sordid aims made the girl's life a misery. On a holiday with a sculptor's wife, she met Marie Antoinette at Marly. On the 10th of May 1774 Louis XV died of the small-pox, and Marie Antoinette became a queen. On the 25th of October Elizabeth Vigée was elected at nineteen to the Academy of St. Luke. But a shadow was to fall. They were living at the Hotel Lubert in the Rue de Cléry where Le Brun, the picture-dealer, carried on his lucrative trade. The two families became intimate, and Le Brun, foreseeing the girl's future, secretly married her. She held the key to the society which he could not enter. The girl had a presentiment of misery; but her own home was miserable. So she married the rogue secretly on the 11th of January 1776, on the edge of twenty-one, and became Elizabeth Vigée Le Brun. It was a sorry match. She early discovered Le Brun to be a gambler, a rake, and a thoroughly dissolute and unscrupulous scoundrel. He had soon not only squandered his own fortune, but was taking every penny she had earned by her untiring industry. She was soon to become a mother, and the secret marriage had to come out. She lavished her love upon her girl-child.

Meanwhile her reputation leaped forward by bounds. The Duchess of Orléans had to wait her turn a whole year before she could be painted. Vigée Le Brun was sung in prose and verse; there was much spilling of doggrel by the poetasters. One Le Brun, the self-nicknamed "Pindar of his Age," plucked at the lyre with both hands in her honour. She was at the centre of the social whirl. From the year of her marriage until she was forty she poured forth her best portraiture. To its earliest, freshest years belongs her first and famous portrait of *Marie*

Antoinette (1779). All was yet gaiety and roses and sunshine, pleasant airs and the glamour that hovers about a throne. Vigée Le Brun was to paint her royal mistress thirty times during the next ten years, until the prison doors shut upon the royal house of France; and there grew up a subtle and charming friendship between the two women.

Vigée Le Brun was happy also in several of the many portraits she painted of herself about this time—particularly the pictures in which she sits with her little daughter. But the world of fashion was now playing at being Greeks. The New Philosophy was triumphing, the middle class was thinking in terms of classic heroes.

In 1782, being twenty-seven, she made a journey into Flanders with the picture-dealing husband, saw the work of the Flemish masters. She fell enamoured of Rubens's famous "Chapeau de Paille," and painted her own sun-flooded portrait under the glamour of it—both now at the National Gallery. On her return to Paris, Joseph Vernet put her name down for election to the Royal Academy; and the portrait of herself caused such a sensation that her election became assured. The Louvre has her allegory of *La Paix ramenant l'Abondance*, which was her work of reception. She was received into the Academy on the last day of May 1783, in her twenty-eighth year. Ugly slander got about that Ménageot, who lived in the same house, painted the allegory; and PIERRE headed the cabal against her. She was basely harassed by jealous artists who tried to have her studio seized on the charge that she was painting without legal title, not having been apprenticed. Spending her entire day from sunrise at her easel, she refused to leave her workshop until the light went, when she received or was entertained by the greatest celebrities of the age. Slander was soon using these triumphs and her favour with the queen wherewith to lash her. Now it so chanced that Le Brun the poetaster, the egregious "Pindar of the Age," one night at her house sang the glories of a Greek supper—it was suggested in jest that they should all array themselves as Greeks and have a Greek supper. It was a

XXIV

VIGÉE LE BRUN

1755 - 1842

"MADAME VIGÉE LE BRUN AND CHILD"

(LOUVRE)

studio farce, a jovial affair, at which "Pindar" Le Brun wearing laurels in his ridiculous hair, a purple mantle about him, played the lord of merriment. The noise of the jollification got abroad. The frugal orgie at fifteen francs was to cost Vigée Le Brun very dear. The tales of its extravagance grew, and a few days thereafter the king was solemnly assured by "one who knew" that it had cost 20,000 francs. Thereafter she was believed to light her fires with banknotes. The truth was that she was being made to share the ugly unpopularity of the queen.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE FRENCH PORTRAIT ON THE EVE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION ESSAYING TO PLAY WITH THE ANTIQUE FRIGIDITY

In 1785 she painted the charming portrait of the little four-year-old *Dauphin and the little Madame Royale* of seven years, now at Versailles, one of her finest works. At the Salon of 1787 she showed the well-known *Marie Antoinette and her Children*, and *Herself with her Girl*, and, amongst others, the famous *Madame Molé-Raymond* with the muff.

The Court was now thoroughly foul of the people. The black storm of the Revolution came booming, gathered, and burst over Paris. Vigée Le Brun gazed down upon it in the street before her dwelling-place with terror-filled eyes. She realised that she must perish if she stayed; she was a marked woman. On the 5th of October of this year of 1789, the fearsome day that saw the rabble marching to Versailles, Vigée Le Brun, taking her girl, hurriedly gathered what money in the studio she could lay hands upon, some three guineas, and leaving her canvases wet upon the easel, she passed out of the studio that had been all the world to her, took her seat in a diligence with her little girl, seated between a thief and a Jacobin, and so passed the gates, out towards the south, making for Italy.

She was to walk to fortune. Everywhere she went she was to be welcomed and honoured—the coming years were to be one long ovation. The precious rascal Le Brun, fearful of his relation to his wife, divorced her, to her great benefit. At Turin she found her name well known; at Bologna she was promptly elected to the Academy; at Florence she was asked to paint her *Self-Portrait* for the Uffizi; at Rome her reception was a triumph. Here she was soon at work again, and eight

months thereafter was at Naples, where she painted Nelson's Emma, *Lady Hamilton, as a Bacchante* and again *as a Sibyl.* It was whilst at Naples that she painted *Paisiello,* the portrait which hung pendant to one by David at the Salon and drew his praise. The Queen of Naples and the royal house all sat to her.

There came awful tidings of the French Court, and, with sorrow at her heart, she bent her steps to Austria, arriving at Vienna after her three years in Italy, in her thirty-seventh year, and knowing for three years thereat the glamour of idolatry. but behind was carking care. Her king and queen went to their death in distant Paris, and her friends fell to the guillotine by the score.

In her fortieth year, Vigée Le Brun made for Prague, and thence roamed through Dresden to Berlin and on to St. Petersburg, where she arrived in the July of 1795, welcomed by the large group of French refugees, and being presented to the Empress Catherine on the morrow of her arrival. St. Petersburg became her second home. She was soon at work, painting the great. The Empress Catherine, though she was disgusted with the weakness of the portraits of the royal children, was to have sat to her, old woman though she was, but her "to-day at eight" was not to be — apoplexy struck her down; she was found dead in her room. The six years at St. Petersburg were amongst the happiest in the artist's life, and brought her fortune. Her reception into the Academy of St. Petersburg was almost a State triumph.

Affairs in France were settling down. Napoleon had restored order and was supreme. But Vigée Le Brun's old friends were scattered—her home-life in Paris would scarce beckon her back again—her Russian friends begged her not to leave, the Emperor Alexander I himself begged her; but her daughter, against her wish, betrothed herself to a scampish Russian diplomat, and the embittered artist turned her eyes towards Paris again. She went first to Moscow, then, in her forty-sixth year, she made for Paris by way of Berlin, painting royalties as she went.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE FRENCH PORTRAIT ON THE EVE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION ESSAYING TO PLAY WITH THE ANTIQUE FRIGIDITY

She entered Paris the year after Napoleon, with great pomp, became First Consul. She had now considerable fortune. The egregious husband took part in her welcome. She was welcomed generously, but she was lost in the new Paris. She wandered to London to find the doors of the great thrown open to her. The noise of London drove her distracted; she moved from lodging to lodging. She became a rage. Byron sat to her. In her fiftieth year (1805) she went back to Paris by way of Holland. As the years went by she settled down, bought a house at Louveciennes, and lived her life between the country and Paris. She died at five in the morning of the 30th of March 1842, in her eighty-seventh year.

Shallow of observation as she was shallow of intellect, Vigée Le Brun was, nevertheless, dowered with many of the gifts of the painter. Her portrait of the *Princess de Talleyrand*, in spite of its affectation, is finely lit and as finely carried out.

There had arisen about La Tour, besides Perronneau, a school of pastellists—Liotard de Genève, the Swede Lundberg, Le Chalier, and others; whilst Boucher, Chardin, Ducreux, Drouais, Madame Roslin, Madame Guyard, and later Prud'hon and Elizabeth Vigée Le Brun, all owed tribute to him.

Madame Guiard or Guyard, known also by her maiden name of Labille, was born in Paris on the 11th of April 1749. A pupil of the Vincents, she, with Elizabeth Vigée Le Brun, was admitted to the Academy of Saint Luke, and later, together, on the 3rd of May 1783, to the Royal Academy. She showed portraits at the Salons from 1783 to 1800, coming into a wide vogue, painting the royal family, the nobility, artists, and celebrities of the Court of Louis Seize in oils and pastels; she clung to Paris through the Revolution, and kept her vogue, painting Citizen This and Citizeness That. *Robespierre* sat to her, as did *Beauharnais* and *Talleyrand*. She married a second time, but as Madame Vincent she is not known to fame. Adelaide Labille-Guiard died in Paris on the 8th of April 1803.

In miniature-painting, which had a prodigious vogue, Massé (1687-1767) and Hall (1739-1793) were brilliant masters.

CHAPTER XXVI

WHEREIN THE ICY BREATH OF ANTIQUITY BLOWS ACROSS THE FRENCH GENIUS AND WELLNIGH FREEZES IT TO DEATH

THE WINTER OF FRENCH ART

Squarcione in Padua and much of the early art of Florence was bastard painting founded on sculpture—as bastard as literary painting—an utter misconception of the function of the art. The writings of Winckelmann on the ancient glories of Athens and Rome, the discoveries and excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum, and Winckelmann's visits to Naples in 1760 to 1762 led in the frigid classic vogue that, under the banner of lofty ideals, came near to destroying the whole significance and function of the art of painting in France, when classic ruins were thrust into French landscapes and the antique heroes dispossessed the dandified folk of the land.

Hubert Robert fell under the pallid spell, as did Vien. Vincent and Regnault and Menageot and Suvée followed, with David as lord of the chill business, not by virtue of his superior gifts as artist, but by reason of his masterly and crafty personality as a man.

VIEN
1716 – 1809

Joseph Marie Vien, on his coming back from Rome in 1754, fell foul of the Academy owing to his love of ancient ideals, of archæology, and of the classic style. He was a good schoolman if no great artist. Boucher, with generous intent, tried to win the painter favour; and Vien seems to have fallen under his glamour, for Vien was soon painting in the prevalent taste, indeed, his two paintings of *The Progress of Love in the Hearts of young Girls* were hailed with delight, and the Du Barry bought them from the Salon of 1773 for her home at Louveciennes.

He became Director at Rome in 1775, taking his pupils with him—amongst them Louis David.

WHEREIN THE ICY BREATH OF ANTIQUITY BLOWS ACROSS THE FRENCH GENIUS AND WELLNIGH FREEZES IT TO DEATH

We now come to the man who, in some measure, bridges the vast gulf between the blithe art of the seventeen-hundreds in France, and the frigid classic ideals that came into art with the Revolution. He wrought his art apart and aloof from both movements even whilst he stood with one foot planted in both achievements.

PRUD'HON

1758 – 1823

PIERRE PRUD'HON was the tenth child born to a labourer in the employ of a stonemason at Cluny, born therefore to the grim life of the peasant, knowing want from his birth. The butt of a large family that resented his mother's love for the youngest, the shy and timid child was to lose both father and mother early. Sent to pick up wood in the forest, the lonely child lived much alone with the haunting spirit of the woods. Fortunately, the Curé Besson, of the parish church of Cluny, took kindly to the lad, made him his acolyte and taught him what he could, ending by sending him to the monastery of the Benedictines, where the rich treasure of artistic things cast a glamour over the sensitive and melancholy boy's imagination. Plucking horse-hair from the harness, he made himself brushes, and carved from wood and soap. The Bishop of Maçon hearing of it, sent the lad to the school of art at Dijon, where DEVOSGES became his master, who thereafter helped him in many ways. There for four years he passed his apprenticeship to art, and rapidly won golden opinions. Going back to Cluny on a visit in the spring of 1777, he became entangled with Jeanne Perret, the daughter of a notary ; and, in the February of 1778, he married her, eleven days before she gave birth to a son. The young fellow, at twenty, had to set to work to keep the house going, for the father of the shrewish woman disowned her. This miserable marriage was to be a blight upon the

man's life. Prud'hon, at his marriage, added the "h" to his name.

Again good fortune came to him—Baron de Joursaunvault, an encourager of talent, gave him work to do, paintings, drawings, and engravings, and greatly befriended and encouraged the sensitive man. His letters to his patron give us his ideals, to create from the antique an ideal form, vitalised by study from the life; whilst he strove to win from Raphael, Titian, and Rubens elegance of arrangement, the sublime, glow of colour, and light and shade. And he pours forth the darker horror of a narrow life at Cluny, fretted by quarrels and shrewish taunts from his wife. He grimly hoards enough money to get him for a winter to Dijon to study art thereat, and lends it to a friend in need instead. However, in 1780, the worthy baron sent him to Paris with a letter to Wille, the engraver; and the young fellow, childishly bucolic, weak and gentle, simple of habit, easily influenced for good or ill, hungering for sympathy, badly needing encouragement, lived for three years in Paris, eagerly striving to create an art unhampered by the taste of others. Here he won the friendship of one Fauconnier and his wife (a lace-maker to the Court) and his sister, a winsome girl who fell in love with him, he keeping his marriage close sealed behind secretive lips. In 1783 he suddenly left Paris, dreading the consequences of further stay. Going to Dijon he competed for the Burgundy Prix de Rome, and won it, going to Rome in 1784. The city made an immense impression upon him. The French students were fiercely attacking Raphael, proclaiming the antique. He avoided them all, seeking that solitary creation of his art which, with Leonardo, he held to be essential to great achievement. Coming first under the glamour of Raphael, he next became subject to Leonardo, then to Correggio. For Burgundy he was called upon to copy Guido Reni's ceiling at the Rospigliosi, but begged for Raphael or Leonardo, and, they being out of the vogue, was allowed to copy a ceiling by Pietro da Cortona, finishing it in 1787. For three years in bouts of enthusiasm and despair he worked at Rome.

WHEREIN THE ICY BREATH OF ANTIQUITY BLOWS ACROSS THE FRENCH GENIUS AND WELLNIGH FREEZES IT TO DEATH

"Leave to such as cannot express emotion and move the heart the trivial trick of amusing the eye—leave them to their tinsel, and seek strength and form, largely conceived, draperies largely handled, and masses that rest the senses." To Paris he moved in easy stages, staying awhile with his wife and child, and painting the old Curé Besson; then awhile at Beaune to model a bust of Madame de Joursanvault, thence to Dijon to paint his old master Devosges, arriving in Paris in that year of 1789 that saw the beginning of the Revolution. There his wife joined him, and there in 1791 his second son was born, and in the year of the Terror, 1793, his third son. His wife would leave the children with him in the studio to drive him to distraction, whilst she went abroad to enjoy the sights, the guillotine at its fell business, and the excitements, whilst he worked at his easel stockingless. But he was glad to be rid of her at least, and would beg his friends to take her out and keep her out. This dreadful woman's constant brawls kept the man in despair.

Into this greyness and penury again stepped fortune in the shape of the Count d'Harlai, who ordered three allegories from him such as he loved to paint. So through the Reign of Terror he produced allegories for Republican decorations, shop-signs, and even a *Venus and Cupid* and *Leda* for a confectioner's bon-bon boxes. When his greatly admired Robespierre fell, being in dire want which the famine of 1794 made tragical, he went into the country, leaving his wife at Rigny for her confinement, and making for the village of Gray on the Saône. The autumn of 1796 saw Prud'hon and his wife in Paris again, where his youngest child Emilie was born. David was autocrat of the arts, and not greatly impressed by the country fellow who called on him; but Greuze, now out of the fashion, was enthusiastic, with "He will go farther than I; he 'll bestride these centuries in seven-league boots." Prud'hon was on the edge of his great success. His design for a ceiling in black and white chalk—*Wisdom and Truth descending on the Earth*—won him apartments at the Louvre. He painted the ceiling, which was too large to get out of his studio at the Louvre; a passage had to be cut for

THE WINTER OF FRENCH ART

it; it appeared at the Salon of 1799, and won him wide recognition. The followers of David might call him "the Boucher of to-day," but Napoleon smiled upon him. He was to paint both Napoleon's empresses; and for him he was to paint many of those large decorations which were his ambition. When in 1801, fearing they might set the place on fire, Napoleon turned the artists out of their apartments at the Louvre, Prud'hon went to the Sorbonne. His wife now became unbearable, and two years thereafter he separated from her—though she would break in upon him on occasion to shower abuse, until, venting one of her hysterical attacks in the presence of the Empress Josephine, she was locked up in an asylum.

Then came into his life the charming pupil of Greuze, that Mademoiselle Mayer who, from pupil, became the loving mother of Prud'hon's children and the maker of friends for him, and watched over his house and interests.

The Salon of 1808, at which he displayed in his fiftieth year his great and dignified *Justice and Divine Vengeance pursuing Crime* and the *Psyche carried off by Zephyrs*, brought him the Legion of Honour from Napoleon, the emperor pinning it upon his breast. A couple of years afterwards he painted the *Virgin*, in the treatment of whom he was not quite so happy. Prud'hon in these, the years of his greatest powers, was now employing that wonderful sense of the upward lift of a figure carried heavenward, of which he was so superb a master. And he gave forth his finest work—the Wallace *Venus and Adonis*, his several renderings of *Psyche* and of *Zephyrs*. The Wallace has his *Minerva uplifting Genius*.

In his sixty-third year fell upon him in 1821 the awful blow that wrecked his sensitive soul. Mademoiselle Mayer, dreading separation from him, entered his studio on a Saturday, the 26th of May, and asked him if he would marry her if his wife died; the man, worried with work, and in an irritated moment, answered "Not I." She left him; went straight to his room, and killed herself with his razor. Prud'hon went on working; but, on leaving his work to take a walk, he found a

group of people gathered in strange excitement, and, as they shrank away from him, he went to his bedroom to find the horrible thing that had been done. Utterly broken-hearted he went to a friend, thence to Cluny, painted *The Soul quitting the Earth*, and in the February of 1823 he died. Thus in misery passed away the last of the blithe decorative painters of the age.

WHEREIN THE ICY BREATH OF ANTIQUITY BLOWS ACROSS THE FRENCH GENIUS AND WELLNIGH FREEZES IT TO DEATH

To a superb sense of spaces and masses, Prud'hon brought a rare feeling for the forms of women. His power of suggesting lift and upward movement was marvellous. He understood the basic significance of art—that it was the expression of the emotions. He pursued art, when the pedants, with frigid minds, were debauching it into science.

DAVID

1748 – 1825

JACQUES LOUIS DAVID was to have been an architect, but his bent towards painting early asserted itself, and he was sent to learn the mysteries under Boucher. From Boucher he went to Vien, at his master's urging; Boucher seeing that he himself was going out of fashion, whilst Vien was the centre of the classic vogue, against the frigid dulness of which Boucher warned the eager, secretive young fellow. So, with MENAGEOT and REGNAULT, David learnt the vogue, made rapid strides, and became a student at the Academy in 1766, his eighteenth year. We have seen him beg Fragonard to allow him to complete his discarded decorations for La Guimard. Self-centred, obstinate, arrogant, and with a lofty sense of his own importance, David was bitterly wounded at losing the Prix de Rome four times, from 1770; but winning it in 1774, he went to Rome with Vien, who had been made Director—went with the phrase upon his lips, "The antique will not influence me; it is too cold and lifeless!"

At Rome he fell under the glamour of the Caracci, thinking less of Raphael and Michelangelo. After much seaching of heart he studied the antique and determined to try and paint in terms of sculpture—thereby, strangely enough, following the

THE WINTER OF FRENCH ART

false ideals of the old Italians at Padua and many men of the Florentine Renaissance. Whilst David thought he was creating the new art, he was harking back to its most bastard form, and mistaking the whole function of painting. Sullen of temper, secretive and solitary, jealous of others seeing him at work, he doggedly mastered the details of antique sculpture and set them on to the painted canvas.

Coming back to Paris in 1781, his thirty-third year, he at once came into repute; and in his portraits he displayed his finer gifts, though even in such he could not rid his art of that slithery sleekness or create aerial space. But his frigid classicalities caught the town.

David now married a rich wife—he had ever the calculating eye, as frigid as his art. And he opened a school which was to have a vast effect on the painting of the time, and came wellnigh to kill it.

He again went to Rome, taking three pupils with him, in order that he might there create his much talked of masterpiece, *Le Serment des Horaces*, to see which all Rome crowded to his studio; and with which, when finished, he returned with much to-do to Paris, displaying it at the Salon of 1785, where its bad hanging roused his wrath and completed his sour dislike of the Academy. Nor did it stand supreme, for the classical frigidities were being created by the yard by VINCENT, MENAGEOT, SUVÉE, REGNAULT (1754-1829) and others, though Reynolds considered David's *Socrates*, a couple of years later, to be the greatest art since Michelangelo and Raphael, and worthy of the age of Pericles! In 1789 he showed his chill *Paris and Helen* and *Brutus*; and the *Brutus* exactly hit the spirit of the year of Revolution. David was not the man to let such good fortune pass by him. He leaped to the pose of the great Roman. He played it with pharisaic care of his own skin and ruthless lack of bowels for his fellows. The Revolution brought him his longed-for revenge on the Academy; he led the attack at the head of the discontented associates against the officials—and though he was right in his saying that academies destroy art instead of foster-

ing it, there was more than this sentiment in his attack. He was looked upon by the extreme Republicans as their man—was made Master of the Pageants in glorification of the Republic—and official painter to the Jacobins, who ordered from him the painting of *The Oath in the Tennis Court.* The September of 1792 saw him elected a deputy to the Convention. He was soon a member of the extreme Jacobins called the Montagnards. Now came his chance to destroy the Academy and blot out his rivals; and he took it with cold-blooded sternness of purpose, under cloak of that Incorruptibility that was the pose of the patriots. Suvée, then Director of the Academy at Rome, he plucked from his office as a "cursed aristocrat"; early in 1793 he led the attack upon the Royal Academy, and it fell in the August of that year of the Terror, the rebels crying in triumph that it was "the Fall of the Bastille of Painting."

WHEREIN THE ICY BREATH OF ANTIQUITY BLOWS ACROSS THE FRENCH GENIUS AND WELLNIGH FREEZES IT TO DEATH

But the destruction of the Academy was only a part of David's heavy business during the Terror. As deputy he was signing death-warrants — he signed that of the Girondist deputies. He was painting the portraits of the Citizens and pictures to the memory of the martyrs of Patriotism. He painted *Marat* in fine fashion. The lust of blood at least stirred his sombre, calculating soul, and under the strut of the Patriot, the Incorruptible, he loosed his fanatic gloating in tyranny, and on a charge of weak patriotism and pallid loyalty to the Republic, he let Regnault and Vincent go to their doom. He learnt his lesson from Robespierre to the letter. Then came one of the basest crimes of his cold calculation. Joseph Vernet's daughter, Emelie Chalgrin, whose husband had fled with the Comte de Provence to Brussels, was left in Paris. The Robespierre faction searched the house for the prince, whose architect Chalgrin was; found some candles with the royal seal; and, baulked of the prince, arrested Emilie. Her brother Carle Vernet rushed off to his friend David, appealing to him to use his powerful aid; only to find David, careful of his own skin, replying with vile pharisaic "*I* painted *Junius Brutus*;

I cannot beg of Robespierre. The tribunal tries with justice; your sister is an aristocrat for whom I will not stir." At last, melted by the young fellow's anguish, he procured an order of release, which he left in his pocket until the guillotine had taken poor Emilie Chalgrin.

But brave men, rid of the brutal fanaticism that assailed the splendour of Liberty, plucked Robespierre from his hellish acts; he fell, and David fell with him. On the 31st of July 1794 he was accused; and, with pallid face of terror, and the cold sweat streaming, he made his poor defence. The prison held him for five months; assailed by fresh accusations, seventeen in all. Yet he painted in prison his fine portrait of *Himself* in his forty-sixth year, the grim, unlovely face with the mouth awry. Released from prison, he was soon at work upon his *Rape of the Sabines*, for which the youths and their sisters, of the burgess class of Paris, were proud to sit nude, there being no other models. In 1795 he painted the famous *Sériziat* portrait at the Louvre.

It must be accounted to David for righteousness that he never forgot his early debt to Fragonard; and protected the old painter when the evil days of the Revolution fell upon him.

When David fell he placed himself under the protection of Napoleon; and he asked to be allowed to paint him after the treaty of Campo-Formio. On his return from the Egyptian expedition, Napoleon was again asked to sit to him; said David, "Fighting, sword in hand"; to which Napoleon answered, "No, my good David; I do not win battles with the sword—I wish to be painted sitting unmoved on a high-spirited horse."

By 1800 David was come to the height of his vogue, the adored painter alike of the First Consul and the people. He was to sully his repute again after the Arena-Caracci conspiracy. His pupil, Topino Lebrun, was accused of designing the weapons for the assassins. The young fellow called David to speak for him; excuses would easily have been made for him, but David loved his own skin and feared the coldness of

Napoleon—he could think of nothing more enthusiastic than that Topino showed promise as an artist, and David's other pupil, Casanova, could mumble nothing better. Topino went to the scaffold.

WHEREIN THE ICY BREATH OF ANTIQUITY BLOWS ACROSS THE FRENCH GENIUS AND WELLNIGH FREEZES IT TO DEATH

When Napoleon fell and went to Elba, David, the first painter to the Emperor, was treated well by Louis XVIII, who turned a blind eye to his signature on Louis the Sixteenth's death-warrant. But his old enemies of the fallen Academy were closing in upon him, when, in the March of 1815, Napoleon appeared again, David joining in the acclamation. To his studio Napoleon came to see the *Leonidas*, and made him a Commander of the Legion of Honour. Believing Napoleon established, David signed the Acts destroying the Bourbons Succession, which, after the disaster of Waterloo, combined with that signature upon Louis the Sixteenth's death-warrant, made David uneasy, and he made for Brussels where he lived the remainder of his days in great honour, painting portraits, trying to catch the Flemish colour-sense, and painting as his last picture the *Mars disarmed by Venus*, which, shown at Paris in 1825, sounded the death of the school over which he had been lord, and brought about that passionate revolution in French art that arose in the rich outburst of the Romantic movement that brought forth the superb modern achievement of France, heralded by Delacroix. On the 29th of December 1825, in his seventy-seventh year, David died, and his frigid and calculating art died with him.

The cold and false art of David that he created with dogged industry in his official paintings of the *Sacre et Intronisation de l'Empereur*, his *La Distribution des Aigles*, and the like, came near to wrecking the art of France. The claim that he initiated the great Romantic movement of the coming years is farcical; neither he nor Ingres had a suspicion of it. He brought into French painting the bastard ideal of painting like sculpture—and he mistook bastard sculpture for the masterpieces of Greece. Were it not for the glamour of the dramatic life he lived, his art would receive scant consideration. But as

a man he stands out as an astounding personality who will hold the eyes of the world, that, rather than turn from it, prefers to accept what bastard, frigid art he practised.

Ruthless in revenge, cold of heart and blood, calculating, careful of his skin, a very bravado when others had to die, sweating the cold sweat of terror when the guillotine loomed above his own head, obstinate and self-willed, much of a dullard, pompous, pharisaic, he yet bound his pupils to him in reverence, though he dared not risk the scowl of his emperor to save a pupil's life.

GUÉRIN
1774 – 1833

P. N. Guérin was one of the most hardened classicists of this period.

GIRODET
1767–1824

A. L. Girodet de Roucy-Trioson is the painter of David's school who kept within the realm of subject. It is the custom to sneer him away as a chill classic; but, as a matter of fact, Girodet was a master of line and of light and shade, as shown in his *Flora*; he ranks high in this age. He brought to his nudes a nervous, rhythmic sense of line that is very exquisite and musical. And whilst he could not rid himself of the burden of his school, he added thereto an emotional utterance that is all too rare. The famous lithograph of his *Flora* made that superb work widely known throughout France.

GÉRARD
1770 – 1837

The school of David brought forth amongst others a young fellow, François Pascal Simon Gérard, who was to have a wide vogue at the Court of Napoleon, whose infant son, the little *Roi de Rome*, he painted—the little Prince Imperial so like in feature to his world-famous father. The child was the son of the emperor's second marriage. Born in 1811, the King of

WHEREIN THE ICY BREATH OF ANTIQUITY BLOWS ACROSS THE FRENCH GENIUS AND WELLNIGH FREEZES IT TO DEATH

Rome was four years old when Napoleon, defeated at Waterloo, handing over to Soult the task of rallying the shattered army, hurried back to Paris, arriving at four in the morning of the 21st of June, himself bearing the first authentic news of the disaster. Finding the Chambers set on his abdication, Napoleon drew up his famous Declaration to the French people, in which, with great dignity, he abdicates his power: "My political life is ended; I proclaim my son, under the title of Napoleon II, Emperor of the French." The act of abdication was by Fouché set before the Assembly, who voted an answer of respectful thanks to Napoleon, but evaded any acknowledgment of the new emperor. The boy grew up, and reached manhood but to die in his twenty-first year, eleven years after his great father was laid in his grave at St. Helena.

GÉRARD, born at Rome in 1770, where his father was serving in the suite of the French Ambassador, had come to Paris in 1782, where, after eighteen months' study, he became pupil to the sculptor Pajou, then to Brenet, then in 1786 to David, on the edge of the Revolution—and David thenceforth wholly influenced his style. He escaped being drawn into the fierce conflict of the Revolution not without difficulty, devoting himself solely and wholly to art, producing much illustration for publishers of books. At last he began to make his mark as a portrait-painter, and came to paint *Napoleon*, *Talleyrand*, *Louis XVIII*, the *Emperor of Russia*, the *King of Prussia*, *Charles X of France*, *Louis Philippe*, and the leading celebrities of his day. An original member of the Legion of Honour, in 1819 he was created a Baron. His later years saw his house the resort of the great and of the world of fashion. He died in Paris on the 11th of the January of 1837. His "historical pictures" are dead, but his portraits keep his memory green.

INGRES
1778 – 1867

There was one man alone of all this classical movement in France who, by sheer genius, rose in achievement above the

THE WINTER OF FRENCH ART

hidebound tradition; who, in spite of himself and against all his intellectual intention, compelled by that vital force of art, the utterance of the emotions, stands head and shoulders above the science and the laws with which he shackled his great powers—Ingres. David found his highest gifts in portraiture; Ingres was to carry the portraiture of the age to its heights.

Amongst the canny, dogged, thrifty people of a barren countryside there lived at Montauban—that sombre, melancholy town of bitter religious strife wherein the families of one creed will not be seen with the families of another—a cultured artistic man named JEAN MARIE JOSEPH INGRES (1734-1814), the son of a tailor of Toulouse, hard by. All the arts he essayed—decoration, sculpture, architecture, miniature-painting, music. He opened a school of art in the town. He was constantly entangled with petticoats, and eventually his wife had to leave him.

To him and his wife, Anna Moulet of Montauban, was born on the 29th of August 1778, a son, to become famous as JEAN AUGUSTE DOMINIQUE INGRES, and to be known as "Monsieur Ingres." Trained in his father's academy both in music and painting, the lad was thereafter—at twelve—sent to Toulouse under VIGAN, thence to ROQUES, in whose studio he fell under the glamour of Raphael's *Madonna of the Chair*; thence at eighteen he went to Paris as pupil to David in 1796. Working with dogged will, by 1799 he was competing for the Prix de Rome, winning the second prize with his *Antiochus and his son Scipio*, burnt by the Commune after the war of '70, but winning the great prize the following year of 1800 with his *Achilles*, now at the Beaux Arts. But money being lacking in the public treasury, he had to stay for five years in Paris, making his daily bread by working for publishers, drawing from the antique in the Musée Napoléon; but it was in these years of daily toil that in 1805 he painted his fine regal *Napoleon, First Consul*, and the *Portrait of his Father* in 1801, which he touched up in 1804. The Chantilly portrait of *Ingres* by himself is of about 1804. He was already beyond the reach of masters, and stands revealed as a master. The three *Rivière* portraits at the Louvre

XXV

DAVID

1748–1825

"PORTRAIT OF MADAME RÉCAMIER"

(LOUVRE)

The candelabrum is said to have been painted by Ingres.

Painted in oil on canvas (unfinished). 5 ft. 7 in. × 7 ft. 10½ in. (1·70 × 2·40).

followed—*Rivière*, *Madame Rivière*, and the "ravishing" daughter *Mlle. Rivière*. David, who had encouraged his pupil, and even deigned to ask his assistance in painting his famous *Madame Recamier*, early began to fear him—indeed it was owing to David that the Prix de Rome of 1799 had gone to an inferior painter. Terribly poor, living upon what he could get for his pencil-drawings, Ingres was comforted by the friendship of two needy comrades, the Florentine sculptor Bartoloni and the Belgian composer Fétis.

WHEREIN THE ICY BREATH OF ANTIQUITY BLOWS ACROSS THE FRENCH GENIUS AND WELLNIGH FREEZES IT TO DEATH

In 1806 the painting of *Napoleon I, Emperor, Enthroned*, fell to him, for the Hôtel des Invalides; but its theatricality and emphasised imperial suggestion were not all the fault of the artist. Official painting at least brought him free lodgings at the old Convent of the Capuchins, which had been made into studios, and where A. J. Gros, Napoleon's painter, also had his vast home filled with "properties."

At the end of this year, the close of his early or "pre-Raphaelite" manner, the Ministry of Fine Arts gave Ingres the funds for the Italian journey; so to the Villa Medici he went with joy at his heart. From the moment of his arrival in Rome he set to work with ardour, his pencil ever in his hand. Thence he went a journey to Florence and Umbria to tread in the footsteps of his adored Raphael. He sent to Paris as specimen of his work a copy of the *Mercury* at the Farnese; and he was painting his portrait of *La Belle Zélie*, now at Rouen. The next year, 1808, the year of his great portrait of *Madame Devauçay* (at Chantilly), he sent to Paris the Louvre *Œdipus and the Sphinx*, in which we see the innate sense of character in the art of Ingres lifting him above the type-making of classicism. The picture roused the ire of the academic, though it is difficult to see why. Here we see that fire of genius in Ingres that raises him above his frigid school—the insight into character. His glorious draughtsmanship is now mastered. In 1808 he followed with the Louvre *Seated Bather*.

To 1810 belongs his fine portrait of *Madame de Sennones* now at Nantes, his masterpiece. In 1811 he sent from Rome the

THE WINTER OF FRENCH ART

Aix *Jupiter et Thetis*; in 1812 the *Romulus*, and thereafter the Louvre *Virgil reading the Sixth Canto*, now at Brussels.

Galled and kept poor by the public indifference to his art, Ingres for bread made some three hundred of the now famous pencil-portraits of strangers passing through Rome, receiving forty francs for a head and shoulder, sixty francs for a full length—the guide who brought the sitter receiving a crown for the introduction. Meanwhile, his time at the Villa Medici at an end, the pictures he painted found no buyers except at a starvation price that did not cover the cost of painting them—the world-famous *Great Odalisque* of the number—and the dictators of taste in Paris vied with each other in contempt. But his faith in himself never wavered. He had the approval at least of Madame Devauçay, Madame Forgeot, Madame Lavalette, of General Miollis the Virgil fanatic, of M. Marcotte. M. de Norvains hotly supported him, ordered portraits, and bought studies by him. Joachim Murat from his own country about Montauban was King of Italy, was also an ardent ally, engaging him to paint *Caroline Murat*, and ordering in 1812 the ceiling of the *Dream of Ossian*, now at Montauban, for the palace of Montecavello, where Napoleon was to lodge at Rome. It was for Murat that he designed the famous *Great Odalisque* in 1814, and the *Betrothal of Raphael* amongst other works; and it was for Murat, in 1814, that he painted the *Sistine Chapel* (or *Pope Pius VII celebrating Mass*). So bright looked the future that, in 1813, Ingres asked a friend, Loréal, to find him a wife; and Lorêal chose a young Frenchwoman who was cashier in a café at Guérat.

Ingres, having done his love-making by letter with Madeleine Chapelle, whom he had never seen, called her to Rome and married the woman who was to enter upon a happy life with him, share his hard years, and die in the July of 1849 after thirty-five years of happiness. She was an ideal love for Ingres. For fortune turned black. Murat fell in 1814. The fall of Napoleon, and the return of the Bourbons, was to be a severe hardship for Ingres; he now went

through severe times. In 1815 he commenced his *Duke of Alva at Ste. Gudule*; in 1816 his *Pietro Aretino and the Envoy of Charles V*; and from 1816 to 1819 his *Death of Leonardo Da Vinci*; in 1819 his *Roger and Angelica*, at the Louvre, well known for its nude female figure chained to a rock; and his *Francesca da Rimini* of the same year—his *Henri IV and Children*, his *Philip V giving the Golden Fleece to the Marshal de Berwick*, his portraits of the sculptor *Cortot*, of *Boyer*, of the painter *Granet*, of the sculptor *Lemoine* and others.

WHEREIN THE ICY BREATH OF ANTIQUITY BLOWS ACROSS THE FRENCH GENIUS AND WELLNIGH FREEZES IT TO DEATH

Painting his *Christ giving the Keys of Heaven to St. Peter*, he moved about 1820 to Florence, where was his old friend the sculptor *Bartolini* who had roused his love of the primitives, and of whom he painted the great second portrait, and followed it with his famous portraits of *Leblanc* and *Madame Leblanc*. These four years at Florence saw Ingres and his wife in a miserable state of penury, and Ingres had to fall back again on his marvellous pencil-portraits for daily bread. An English admirer now offered to take him to London for two years, but, after serious consideration, Ingres refused—then fortune came tapping at his door in the shape of Count Amédée de Pastoret, afterwards Marquis de Pastoret, who ordered from him in 1821 the *Entry of Charles V into Paris*, and afterwards procured him the order from the French State for the *Vow of Louis XIII.* Ingres showed at the Salon of 1827 a portrait of *Count Amédée de Pastoret.*

Ingres troubled little about money, so long as he could win bread to work.

But, strange to say, it was with his mediocre painting of the *Vow of Louis XIII*, a sheer piece of imitation, that Ingres was to win Paris at the Salon of 1824. The "modern Raphael" had conquered. Coming back to Paris with his picture, he nervously dreaded a chill reception; but was hailed by GROS, GÉRARD, GIRODET, and others. GIRODET, a greatly overlooked painter of this classic school, whose *Flora* is a masterpiece, died the following year, and in 1825 Ingres was

THE WINTER OF FRENCH ART

elected to his vacant place in the Institute. With this academic Raphaelism Ingres now became the leader of the Academy against the rising school of Romance. Henceforth his cares were at an end. Paris tried to buy the *Vow*, but Ingres was faithful to his own city; yet amidst all the praise the Archbishop of that city refused to have a naked Child-Christ, with two naked infants, in his cathedral, *until gold fig-leaves disguised their innocence!*

Ingres set up two studios, and went to work on his full-length portrait of *Charles X* in his royal robes, at the same time opening a school of art. His ambition grew with success—he launched upon the large painting of the *Apotheosis of Homer*, intended for a ceiling at the Louvre. Ingres wrought this work with a certain frigid dignity and was now thoroughly mistaking scholarship and research into antiquity for art. Meanwhile his studio was drawing many disciples, Flandrin, Chassériau, Lehmann, amongst the rest. The huge *Martyrdom of St. Symphorian* followed, and largely chilled the repute of the *Homer*. But even as he wasted himself on the grand mimicries, he painted the great portrait of *Bertin* in 1833.

In 1834, cursing his people and the age, Ingres succeeded Horace Vernet at Rome as Director of the French Academy there; and there he remained until 1841, the Salons at Paris the while displaying his *Stratonice*, wherein he more than ever mistakes painting for literature, his *Little Odalisque* (or *Odalisque with Slave*, at the Louvre), his *Virgin with the Host*, the portrait of *Cherubini*, and showing in 1842 his allegorical failure, *the Muse of Lyric Poetry*, now at the Louvre, being a portrait of Mademoiselle de Rayneval, and painted in 1840, the year of his *Raphael and the Fornarina*.

"Monsieur Ingres," as he was called, came back to Paris in 1841, the centre of a wide vogue, recreated by his *Stratonice*. The artists hailed him as master and gave him a great banquet, from which Delacroix absented himself, increasing the breach between them. Ingres had begun in his first years at Rome two superb nudes, the *Venus Anadyomene* and the *Source*; in 1848 he

completed the famous *Venus Anadyomene*. His last great portrait of a man was his well-known full-length of the *Duke of Orléans* in uniform. But his "waste of time" on portraiture was fortunately to be considerable under the Second Empire—*Madame d'Haussonville* in 1845, *Madame Reisat* in 1846, *Madame de Rothschild* in 1848, *Mesdames Moitessier* (full-length) and *Gonse* in 1852, the *Princesse de Broglie* in 1853.

WHEREIN THE ICY BREATH OF ANTIQUITY BLOWS ACROSS THE FRENCH GENIUS AND WELLNIGH FREEZES IT TO DEATH

In 1849, Ingres lost his wife; three years later he married *Delphine Rameh*, half his own age of sixty, of whose plump being he made a fine portrait in 1859, the year of his Uffizi portrait of himself.

In 1854 he painted his *Joan of Arc*, for which he shows poor gifts of romance—and the Raphaelesque *Virgin with the Host*.

In 1855 Ingres received a Grand Medal at the Universal Exhibition, and the Emperor made him a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour. The second portrait of *Madame Moitessier* was of 1856, a half-length.

In 1856 Ingres took up and completed his superb nude by which he is chiefly known, that rare example of great draughtsmanship known as *The Source*, at the Louvre. It were as though he felt compelled to utter his swan-note, and he rose to his supreme powers in giving forth his exquisite ideal of womanhood, painted from the shy daughter of his concierge.

Called to the Senate in 1862, the year in which he finished his feeble *Christ amongst the Doctors*, he made some studies for the unfinished wall-paintings of the *Age of Gold* and the *Age of Iron*; and he now painted a number of replicas of his works.

On the 14th of January 1867, at his house on the Quai Voltaire, he died—his widow there surviving him until 1895. To his town of Montauban he bequeathed three thousand drawings, painted sketches, manuscripts, and other valuable belongings.

Dominique Ingres painted so many repetitions of his works that it is difficult to follow their exact history.

With an utter contempt for all modern art, Ingres believed only in Raphael and the masters of Raphael's age; and, in spite

THE WINTER OF FRENCH ART

of many of the gifts of genius, this false estimate of the significance of art laid a heavy blight upon his instincts. Lacking imagination, yet impelled to essay great compositions for which he had scant gifts of arrangement or coherence, he never mastered invention. He was greatest when stating, with consummate powers of draughtsmanship, the thing before him. He was by instinct a great realist; he hungered to be an idealist. Of romance he had not a shred; and the bookish claim that he belonged to the Romantic movement is farcical. He detested it; and his art has no hint of it. Every gift he possessed, and he possessed some of great power, he compelled into his service; but he lacked just that essential power, that uncontrollable fire of great genius that thrusts the utterance of the emotions upon us with conquering usurpation. If one but remembers that the consuming fire of the genius of Turner wrought his sublime art in these years, one realises the limitations of Dominique Ingres. He had the scholar's mind rather than the originative force of the artist. He could not, and did not catch the spirit of his age—he ever hungered after tradition. And it is only in his portraits, and his painting from the nude before him, that he reaches to his higher gifts, to which he himself was quaintly blind. He was incapable of forward vision, and, being incapable, he denied vision: "Everything has been done; everything has been found out," said he. He despised colour; when a thing was well drawn, for Ingres, it was well painted. The colour of his *Homer* is harsh and frigid. And, suspecting Shakespeare and Goethe of romance, he refused them admission to the crowning of Homer! Even his superbly drawn nude girl in *La Source* is painted without emotional sense of colour. And his line, fine as is his drawing, lacks fire.

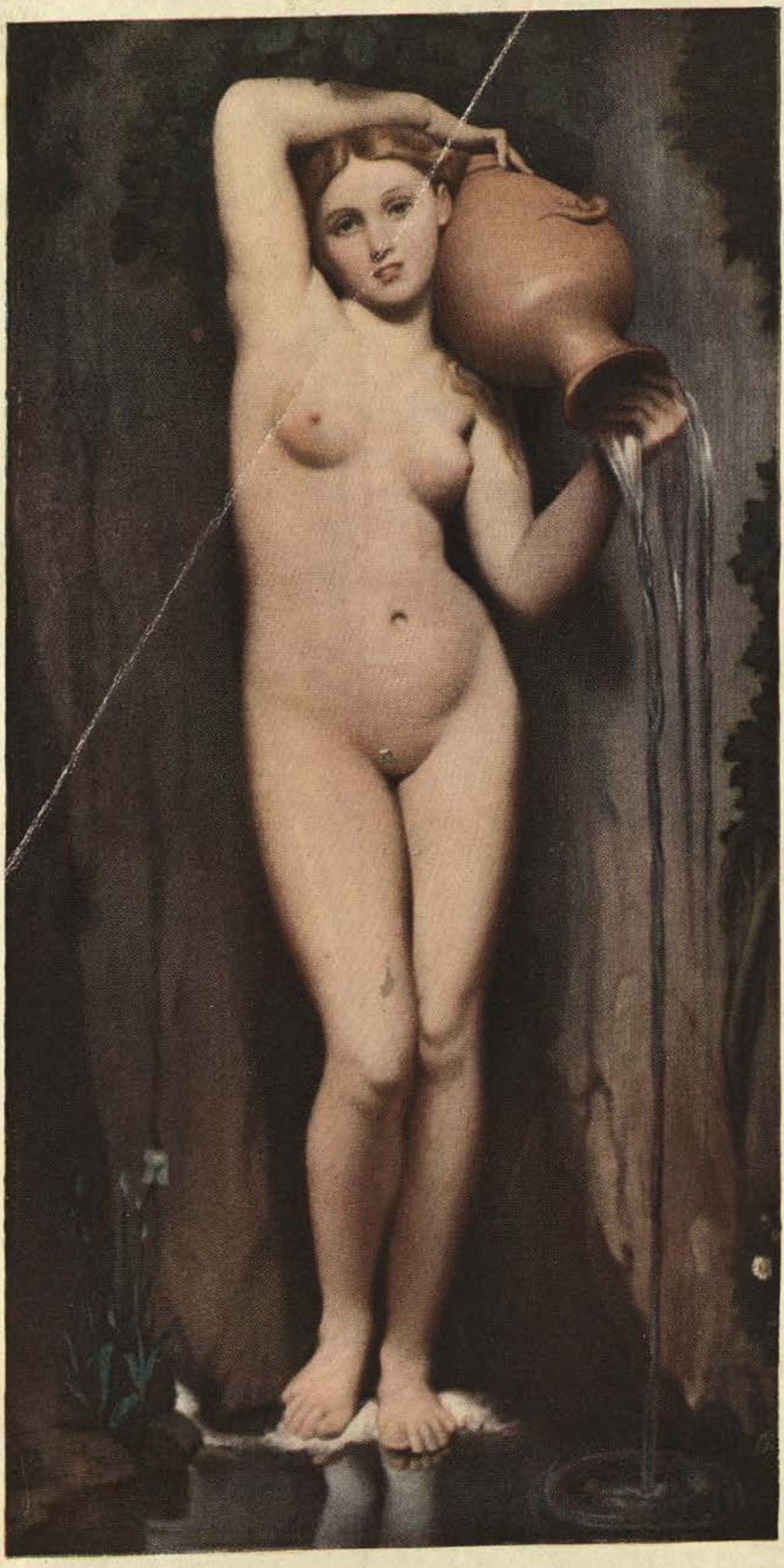
XXVI

INGRES
1778-1867

'THE SOURCE"
(La Source)

(LOUVRE)

Signed on a stone on the left: "INGRES, 1856." Painted in oil on canvas. 5 ft. 5 in. × 2 ft. 7½ in. (1·65 × 0·80).



CHAPTER XXVII

WHEREIN THE PUPILS OF FRIGIDITY BREAK FROM THE ANTIQUE AND MAKE FOR THE LAND OF ROMANCE

GROS
1771–1835

WHEREIN THE PUPILS OF FRIGIDITY BREAK FROM THE ANTIQUE AND MAKE FOR THE LAND OF ROMANCE

Born at Paris on the 16th of March 1771, Gros in youth became one of David's pupils. He reached manhood on the eve of the year of Terror. He was, all unwitting of it, to start that great romantic movement that was to rid France of the obsession of false classic spectacles. It was Gros who, bored by the frigid "art" that sought its inspiration in the classic writers and antiquity, came forth boldly and sought for subjects amongst the heroic acts of his own age. He never shook off the traditions in which he had been bred; but at least he broke with them, even if, in the end, he lapsed back into them.

From David's academics he made for Italy, not to soak further in tradition, but to seek in the field with Napoleon the realities of history that was being made, so that in touch with life he painted in 1804 his *Napoleon visiting the Plague-stricken at Jaffa*, and in 1808 his *Battle of Eylau*, in which he interprets human suffering and motives; and in the doing sheds the pallid classic from him. Of his other famous works are the *Bonaparte at Arcole* and the portrait of *General Fournier-Sarlovèze* against the smoke of battle. He went back to the withering atmosphere of David, 'tis true, and fell into the morass; but he had sounded a note that did not die. Géricault heard it. After the fall of Napoleon, Gros was to fall out of the fashion. Gros came back to Paris famous, and Napoleon made him a baron. Soon finding himself assailed as a renegade by the very men whom he had led, smarting under the assaults of the artists on showing

his *Hercule et Diomede* in 1835, he drowned himself in the Seine at Meudon on the 26th of June 1835.

GÉRICAULT

1791 – 1824

JEAN LOUIS ANDRÉ THÉODORE GÉRICAULT was born at Rouen on the 26th of September 1791. In fierce contrast with the Academic classic school was the group of men bored to death with Greece and Rome, and impelled to utter their age. Of these was GÉRICAULT, unfortunately dying before he had achieved his fulness of promise. Trained under Carle Vernet and then under GUÉRIN, but even more by a dogged self-education from the Old Masters at the Louvre, he came to use of colour. He brought back the art of painting out of books and histories; rushed into the open, and came to grips with it. His famous *Chasseur à Cheval* and the *Wounded Cuirassier* of 1813 show him realising the essential basis of art. His painting of shipwrecked sailors on *The Raft of the Medusa* of 1819 brought back French eyes to life. It struck a deadly blow to the frigid school of David. Gros had shown him the way with his florid efforts to treat the history of his own day; and Géricault's greater force, his daring and his power, rapidly thrust him to the front. He struck down the bookish theories of repose, and went boldly for movement; he came to grips with pathos and suffering. Going to England to show his *Raft*, he fell into a black, brooding fit, and attempted his own life. There he discovered the rich English genius for colour, and brought back with him to France the glory of it all. He had seen the horse painted, and he was struck by the English endeavour to catch its elusive gallop. The Louvre holds his *Epsom Races*, in which is a far different vision from the *Wounded Cuirassier* painted before he crossed the Channel, or his *Chasseur Officer*. The extended gallop, which came from the East into England in 1794, Géricault took to France, whence it went to Germany in 1840; its falsity has lately been proved,

but it led to movement. He died on the 18th of January 1824 from the injuries caused by a fall from his horse.

But we cannot understand fully the great romantic movement of modern France without noticing that the short-lived Englishman, BONINGTON (1801-1827), who died at twenty-six, greatly influenced Delacroix and the coming school.

WHEREIN THE PUPILS OF FRIGIDITY BREAK FROM THE ANTIQUE AND MAKE FOR THE LAND OF ROMANCE

DELAROCHE
1797 - 1856

HYPPOLITE DELAROCHE, called PAUL DELAROCHE, born at Paris on the 17th of July 1797, became pupil to Gros, and followed the naturalistic and romantic tendencies that were abroad, being greatly influenced by Delacroix. Delaroche applied romance to historic incidents, as though they came out of poems, and won to a wide repute. His best-known works are the *Christian Martyr*, the *Death of Elizabeth* and the *Princes in the Tower*; greatest and most poetic of all his far-famed martyred girl who floats upon the tide. He was not wholly able to rid his art of the classic frigidity; but he essayed the romantic note, and sought after emotion and passion. He died in Paris on the 4th of November 1856.

ARY SCHEFFER (1795-1858) had a vogue in his day, but his art is frigid and hard; and it is difficult to believe him the Dutchman that he was.

MARTIN DROLLING (1752-1817) was a good painter of the home-life in these days, as was LOUIS LEOPOLD BOILLY (1761-1845).

DELACROIX
1798 - 1863

The family of Delacroix had given many statesmen and soldiers to France; it was now to bring forth a painter of significance. Delacroix is chiefly important in French art as being the increaser of Géricault's romantic intention, and thereby leading towards that superb utterance of France in the eighteen-hundreds which, with England, created modern art.

Criticism is inclined to overrate his achievement in proportion to his influence. His rich and glowing sense of the emotional use of colour is so superb, that there is this tendency to mistake the forerunner for the achievers, for whom he prepared the way. He rid Violence of striving after Repose ; he pitched the Science of the critics into the waste-paper basket—their worthiest receptacle. He realised that the function of a battle was to be a battle ; that murder was before all else murder ; he kicked "ideal beauty" under the table.

Born at Charenton-Saint-Maurice on the 26th of April 1798, EUGÈNE DELACROIX seemed destined for great enterprise —narrowly escaping fire, the infant was as nearly drowned ; at two-and-a-half years of age he hanged himself, and was only just saved ; thereafter he was nearly choked by a grape ; he swallowed oxide of copper, and came through it all. As a boy at school he drew over his books, but it was only as a youth of seventeen that he decided for an art career, going to the studio of GUÉRIN, pupil of David, where he seems to have made no mark whatever. But he was hard at work at the Louvre the while, studying the old masters ; and there, whilst working at water-colours under the guidance of the brother of Copley Fielding, he met Bonington. So the young Delacroix worked, in considerable neediness, until at twenty-four he painted and, very much against Guérin's orders, displayed his famous *Dante and Virgil* which the State bought, as they did his next picture, *The Massacre of Scio*, at the Salon of 1824, a painting strongly influenced by the *Haywain* by Constable, under whose glamour he came in the year that Géricault died.

Fortunately Delacroix now began his journal, which contains the interesting record of his art.

The next year saw him in England, where he worked under Bonington and the Fieldings, and picked up considerable dramatic force from Wilkie, whose art is grossly underrated by the bookish writers on art to-day. This Englishing of his art brought him a rich sense of colour ; but it also gave him a tendency to see English. His *Sardanapalus* was of 1828,

XXVII

DELACROIX
1798 – 1863

"THE ENTRY OF THE CRUSADERS INTO CONSTANTINOPLE"

(LOUVRE)

Painted in 1841 for the Gallery at Versailles, whence it was subsequently removed to the Louvre.

as was his Wallace *Marino Falliero*. But the *Sardanapalus* brought a threat of loss of favour, and he had little more to live upon "than a counter-jumper," though his poverty seems to have had no chilling effect on his fine opinion of himself—he writes of his "sublime and puissant gifts" and "rare genius" in his diary, though shy and modest to the world. The Duke of Orleans and Duchess de Barry now became his patrons.

WHEREIN THE PUPILS OF FRIGIDITY BREAK FROM THE ANTIQUE AND MAKE FOR THE LAND OF ROMANCE

In 1831 he painted the *Liberty at the Barricades*, in which he treated the subject with intense realism. The year 1832 saw him in Morocco and Spain, where his love of the eastern splendour was fanned by the southern colour and romance, and led to the creation of those Oriental subjects of glowing colour which are his chief glory—the *Algerian Women*, the *Jewish Wedding*, the *Crusaders* and the like. Delacroix breathed the romance and sentiment of his age, of which Byron uttered the poetry in verse. Coming back to Paris in 1833, he was given the large decorations of the Salon du Roi in the Chamber of Deputies, on which he spent four years of his career, much of the work being done by his assistants owing to his ill-health. But the Academy gave him the cold shoulder. He applied for the chair left empty by Gérard's death in 1837, but one of the house of David was called instead, named Schnetz. His efforts in 1838 also failed. In 1840 he painted his famous Byronesque *Shipwreck of Don Juan*.

Delacroix again made an assault on the Academy in 1849, only to fail. He tried again in 1853, only again to fail. But his attack in 1857 saw him win into the goal. He was to live but *six* years to enjoy what honour there was in the business—years of prodigious industry. The *Ceiling of the Apollo Gallery* at the Louvre; the *Salon de la Paix* at the Hôtel de Ville; the *Chapelle des Anges*, and other feverish endeavours broke down his always feeble body—and he was now ageing. In 1859 he refused to send works to the Salon owing to hostile and ever-increasing bitterness of criticism.

In the May of 1863 he retired to his house at Champrosey; his journal ends on the 22nd of June; by August he felt himself

THE WINTER OF FRENCH ART

a doomed man, made his will, and ten days thereafter, the 13th of August 1863, he died.

A shy, reserved man, a modest but brilliant talker, refined and polished of manner, intelligent and well-read, Delacroix gave himself body and soul and mind and strength to his art. Though he fretted at the lack of woman's companionship, he never married. Sincere in his art, he devoted to its creation his whole energies. When at work, he flung himself furiously at his art, forgetful of food. A suffering man all his life, he toiled with feverish will. It was said of him in jest that he took nearly as long to set his palette as to paint his masterpiece. In his later years he had but one meal a day, thinking he was the better for it.

He fought the Italian and Antique Vision; he attacked Ideal Beauty; he was a hot enemy of the Academic that blights all art. He realised that the music of painting lay in colour. He realised that art is the utterance of living things, not of dead traditions. He carried on the torch that Gros and Géricault had lit, and fanned it into a beacon-light for the guidance of the supreme achievement of France in the years to come.

The French Revolution, which should have given voice to the genius of French art, was followed by the Imperial designs of Napoleon; and for awhile the classic chill fell upon her artistic utterance. But Gros pushed at the door of Romance; Géricault thrust his foot into the breach; and Delacroix pushed it open for France to burst into song.

THE END OF VOLUME VI

Printed by T. and A. Constable, Printers to His Majesty
at the Edinburgh University Press

00063788

Digitized with financial assistance from
Observer Research Foundation
on 17 May, 2019